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Is there life after ecumenism?

SEBASTIAN MOORE
Experiencing the resurrection

ABIGAIL McCARTHY
Faith of our fathers

MAX L. STACKHOUSE
Religious right: new? right?

John Tracy Ellis on Owen Chadwick
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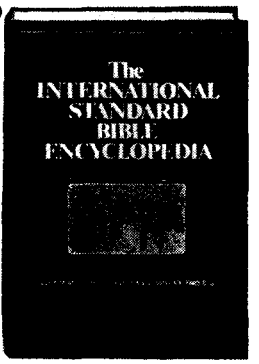

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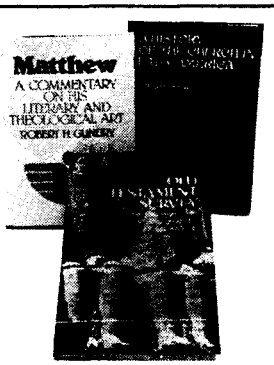

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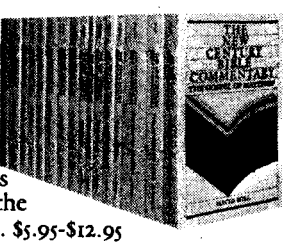

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Correspondence

Lacking conviction?

Fairfax, Va.

To the Editors: For the first time since 1937, I have read an editorial in *Commonweal* which is of weak construction and is poorly written—"The Bishops as Peacemakers" [Dec. 18]. Did you lack conviction. . . . ?

JOHN RIEGER

Roots to peace

Memphis, Tenn.

To the Editors: Your editorial concerning the movement of the bishops of the United States in addressing nuclear weapons is an excellent accomplishment [Dec. 18]. I would like, however, to point out how the influence of the *Commonweal* during all these years has had its part in the continual struggle to surface the value of non-violence. When we see the growing concern of the officialdom of the church, please know that your continuing efforts of education in this field has been the root from which the virtue of peace is beginning to sprout. I remember with gratitude your encouragement when I first addressed this question.

(MOST REV.) CARROLL T. DOZIER, D.D.
Bishop of Memphis

Unkind to Friedan

Rochester, N.Y.

To the Editors: Betty Friedan has never enjoyed a sympathetic reception in the pages of *Commonweal*, but the flippant review of *The Second Stage* by Margaret O'Brien Steinfels is unjust and unkind [Dec. 18].

I cannot agree that Phyllis Schafly leads a movement. She is simply the articulate spokesman of the forces of reaction that oppose women's liberation. It is not a movement, because it isn't going anywhere, because its whole aim is preserving the status quo. If it had not been Schafly, it would have been someone else.

Certainly there were excesses in the woman's movement. There are always excesses in movements of the oppressed. We have seen them in the civil rights movement and old socialists used to deplore their "lunatic fringe."

Steinfels complains that Friedan does not address herself to the situation of the most oppressed women, the very poor. But the whole book does not address itself (with proposed solutions) to any particular problem. Its thesis is that new strategies must be developed and that women must give more attention to their desires for families.

Steinfels criticizes Friedan for going to West Point and not inveighing against the military establishment. Friedan went to West Point to inform herself on the status of women and families in the armed forces and she came back with some rather interesting findings.

This is not to say that Friedan's book does not have some serious shortcomings. The literary style leaves something to be desired and there is no index.

But Friedan, whose 1963 book did set in motion some forces that brought about significant gains for women, comes through as reflective, generous and concerned about men and women. These qualities do not characterize Steinfels's review.

ELIZABETH GIBSON

Sterling propaganda

Winnipeg, Manitoba

To the Editors: Claire Sterling's book on international terrorism, *The Terror Network*, [Review, Sept. 25], endorses and promotes the Reaganite line on this issue while ignoring the massive contribution that the U.S.A. makes to this evil, whether in the form of propping up, in every way, brutal dictatorships (such as are to be found all over "the free world") which use terror tactics as the normal tools of governing and/or creating/maintaining, arming, funding and training subversive groups within a country whose government doesn't fit into the U.S.A.'s plans for the area, and whose job (the subversives', that is) it will be to get rid of said unwanted government for the U.S. There's a good word to describe such books: propaganda.

K. TAYLOR

Detrimental to the craft

Los Angeles, Calif.

To the Editors: I must respectfully disagree with Pope McCorkle's favorable review of Michael Arlen's *The Camera Age* [Sept. 25]. I find Mr. Arlen to be a poor television reviewer and an uninteresting social observer. I also think his work is detrimental to the craft of criticism itself. The cardinal sin that Arlen commits is lack of interest in his work. He admits accepting the role of television critic on a whim, so obviously the passion that he brought to such subjects as the Black Panthers and Vietnam is missing.

While it is not necessary that a critic be in love with the subject he is reviewing, I think he should like it or at least be able to see the possibilities inherent in such a medium. With Arlen I never get this feeling.

He never takes the time to discuss the regular comedies, dramas, daytime programming, the work of P.B.S., sporting events, etc. Instead, he writes sporadically about whatever strikes his fancy. His work is that of a frustrated general essayist, using television as a springboard to muse rather boringly about America. He keeps telling us that he likes the medium but not the programming. He neglects to tell us, however, how he would change or improve it.I can't remember him ever using his clout to encourage artists to continue their work and expand their visions or to help audiences discover a show. Judging from his passive approach to television,

(Continued on page 62)

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THEOLOGY: CREATING OUT OF CHAOS

JAMES JOYCE is supposed to have remarked once to an aspiring young author, "Young man, you have not enough chaos in you to create a world." At a time full of pining for old securities, Joyce's hard saying deserves meditating on, especially for those who would try to figure what's going on in the world of contemporary theology.

What's going on is nearly everything, and by the measure of chaos, or to an outsider apparent chaos, plenty of new world-ing ought to be in store. Our guess is there's no stopping it. Item: the annual joint conventions just before Christmas of the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Biblical Literature in San Francisco; collectively, these two professional groups represent the broad ecumenical conversation partners for Catholic theologians in this country. Down in numbers from previous years due to budget cuts and the inconvenient pre-Christmas timing, the meeting still drew several thousand, with 840 papers delivered on subjects ranging from Nag Hammadi gnosticism to Khomeini's theology; from Targumic studies to North American Indian religion, music and art in religion, computer-assisted research, Eastern Christianity, the histories of Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Ugaritic studies, and women in religion, East and West and South — just about everything religious or quasi-religious (like Marxism) under sun and moon. The knowledge explosion, erupting like Mt. Helena, gives off a lot of smoke; unless you're an electronic age polymath — like Father David Tracy perhaps — the One in the Many here, the narrative line, is difficult to discover. The impression is oneiric, that of dream-simultaneity, like entering one of E.M. Forster's Hindu caves.

Yet, if you listen to these professors talk personally about what drew them to the field of religious studies, they testify that here they were able to ask, and seek answers to, all those urgent big questions that haunt the nighttime mind, and that seem to slip outside the enforced margins of other, narrower disciplines. Behind the academic cool lies the great passion, the romance really, of understanding the primal *poesis* or making, the heartland sources not only of one's own soul and culture but of others'. At a time when, despite Stockmanesque illusions of knowing "how the world works," so many traditional forms of culture and commerce no longer do work, it seems no coincidence that so many should choose to investigate the archeology of the human mind at its mythic beginning and transition points. But it's just this passion to get at the roots of a soul's and a culture's remaking which links these ivory-tower academics to the tacit metaphysician and theologian in us all — the one whose night or early dawn wondering pushes hard against the cultural prisons we make for ourselves.

If there are links, though, between professionals and laypersons, there are also gaps. As double-agents, translating between their own community and the wider culture, Catholic theologians, especially in America, have often been met with

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suspicious scrutiny from their fellow-Catholics. Such anti-intellectualism does not obtain now to the same degree, but the theologian's communication problem is intensified today by the very fact that his field has become increasingly interdisciplinary, a crossroads where all methods of cultural interpretation meet and bear on the result; doing theology today is thus singularly complex, reflecting as perhaps no other discipline does the multiple interweave of our world — a world paradoxically high-tech and high-touch at one and the same time. Given this complexity, the wonder may be that theologians can speak at all, much less with one voice — but that specialized languages are needed to take account of so much is understandable, at least at this stage.

Yet frustrating — to bishops, social activists, and the rest of us in our city trenches; theologians, called to clarify issues, must beware of obfuscation no less than bureaucrats or Mr. Haig. To expect , however, more than this is to delude ourselves that the theologian swims in some privileged cultural current immune from the splits of mind and heart that afflict us. The point is the theologian is one of us, called to help us understand a common dilemma and hope. For as Robert Bellah pointed out some years ago in a landmark essay titled "The Evolution of Religion," since the Reformation the Western religious impulse of service has distributed itself throughout *all* the institutions of society; consciously or not, the church gave away its monopoly over the gospel spirit, secreted it in the very fabric of secular society. And so, whether we feel impelled by some real and shared victory of the spirit to gather (in a place called 'church') to shout alleluia has everything to do with whether, in industry, commerce, science, the arts, and politics, there is anything to shout about, or a "we" to shout it. Are we glad about what we do? The whole thing, and giving thanks for it, hinges on the *quality* of our work and play, and what we do or do not put into them. No theologian can substitute for that — though, with some word akin to Walker Percy's "ontological lapsometer" (*Love in the Ruins*), a theologian might well divine what's missing.

One of the things missing, of course, is a vigorous comparative-religions perspective applied to our public life and foreign policy. Take the current youth culture. As Father Walter Ong pointed out in his 1964 Terry Lectures (*The Presence of the Word,* reissued by University of Minnesota Press, 1981), electronic communications portend a psychic revolution that changes the way the world appears. Not surprisingly, we've got a whole new generation, raised on wrap-around stereophonic sound and TV, that's closer to the mind-set of primitive animists than anything we've heard of since before the Guttenberg revolution. Is this promising? At least a history-of-religions perspective would help us understand and use the new human potential released by this dramatic psychological shift.

Or take the issue of the transfer of technology to the third world. Innocents abroad, we commonly assume this can be done on crudely pragmatic principles, scrubbed clean of the very notions of God, cosmos, material world, and self that triggered the science and technology we would export. But observe, as is frequently the case, any high-caste Hindu plant manager refusing to get his hands dirty to maintain imported Western machinery; he knows in his bones that technology isn't neutral—and so do the ayatollahs of Iran. And so does any authority in an oral-aural culture know that the transistor radio and the Western businessman in greyflannel and attaché case are covert agents of Western ideas, missionaries—only more disguised ones—no less than Francis Xavier.

We do not agree with their premises, but it's probably a healthy sign that champions of American capitalism like George Gilder and the people at the American Enterprise Institute are finally coming out of the woodwork and saying out loud what the "theology" behind the selling of America really is. Thus far, however, the promising public debate here is largely a monologue: there were no theological papers at San Francisco addressing the questions raised by George Gilder; in fact, most of the professional theologians we spoke with at the meeting had never even heard of him.

WM. CLANCY, 1922-1982

William Clancy, writer, editor, teacher, priest, died on January 6, 1982. The many people who crowded St. Paul's Cathedral in Pittsburgh on the bitter cold day of his funeral were testimony to the remarkable effect he had on those whose lives he touched.

A graduate of Notre Dame, Bill began his journalistic career at *Commonweal* in the early 1950s [1952-1955]. On the basis of many articles and editorials — reflective, incisive, often controversial, and always eloquent — he became known as "Mr. Liberal Catholic." He was subsequently religion editor of *Newsweek* and founding editor of *Worldview*, which he left to begin his studies for the priesthood. After three years study at Christ College, Oxford, Bill returned to be ordained by John Cardinal Wright, then bishop of Pittsburgh. As Father William Clancy he became, in 1968, provost of the Pittsburgh Oratory where he remained and from which he was buried. Along the way he taught a course on Roman Catholicism at the University of Pittsburgh, appeared on radio and TV programs, lectured, debated, wrote—and ate, drank, and talked with the many friends he made so readily. The last was not the least of his accomplishments.

Bill and I had become close friends almost upon acquaintance and he was subsequently godfather to my wife Molly, best man at our wedding, godfather to our son, and a friend to our other children. (An exchange between a ten-year-old daughter and Bill: "You're a nice man Bill Clancy." "Well . . .

MEMORIAL SERVICE

A memorial service for William Clancy will be held at 6:30 PM, Friday, Feb. 19, at St. Joseph's Church, 359-365 Sixth Ave. and Washington Place, New York City. All are welcome.

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I try to be." "And you succeed.") We not only experienced Bill's genius for friendship amounting to love, we saw it manifested in his relations with a wide range of people — intellectuals, bores, the talented and successful, those others called fools, losers and failures and celebrities. With these, without conscious intent, free of cliché and current jargon, he cut through labels and non-essentials to what people took seriously about themselves. Very frequently, with Bill, these things came to be cast in religious terms, for he always saw what was transient, including ourselves, against that which is not.

It was not that Bill did not appreciate this world. He loved the things of this world in all their particularity, making nice discriminations in music and poetry, food and wine. Excellence was the criterion. (As one of his friends said on is death: "May a heavenly banquet await him, for no one could enjoy it more.") Celebrations and occasions were important to him — including his own wake and funeral services for which, typically, he left the most detailed and considerate instructions. But he wrote that the believer is always a stranger and a pilgrim and he frequently quoted from one of the greatest of psalms, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" It was at least partially in response to this question that "Mr. Liberal Catholic" came to question, in his last years, some recent changes in the church and political positions that he had once advocated.

Bill's life was a continuing attempt — imperfect as it must inevitably be — to sing the Lord's song. He has now left his many friends and this strange land. May eternal light shine upon him. JAMES FINN

(James Finn, an editor of Commonweal *from 1955 to 1961, is currently editor of* Freedom at Issue.

California referendum

NUCLEAR FREEZE

BISHOPS & NOBEL LAUREATES

PART OF THE MESSAGE in those surprisingly large demonstrations in Europe against super-power nuclear rivalry pitched on the mid-continent turf was exasperation that the American public does not show parallel concern about the likely outcome of a nuclear buil-up. The marches, parades, and speeches appealed to governments to forbear, But quite as much, they aimed to awaken world opinion. Certainly American opinion.

Well, the yeast has spread. A ferment is at work. In its own fashion the American response to nuclear hazard is taking shape. That shape promises to be political. it could prove more potent than peace marches.

In California, where law-making by popular will is the style and easy recourse to the ballot with powerful social issues has often pioneered national political movements, petitions are circulating now to put before voters next November a call for a bilateral "freeze" on all nuclear weapons by the U.S. and the USSR.

The "freeze" idea has been circulating among various states for the past couple of years. It grew from exasperated U.S. delegates at the UN's 1978 special session on disarmament. As Harold Willens put it, "It became clear if we relied on governments to end the arms race, humanity would be obliterated. We saw that governments were locked into face-saving positions of rivalry they could not escape. We felt that humanity's survival is the greatest moral issue of our time and that only a citizen's movement that reached past governments could pressure governments to put down nuclear weapons."

The idea has already drummed up enough U.S. support to get favorable resolutions through the Massachusetts and Oregon legislatures and win unanimous approval in the New York state assembly. It prompted large town-meetings in New Hampshire and Vermont. Last March, the "freeze" proposal drew people from thirty four states to a conference in Washington D.C. to fashion strategy for a four-year drive to build public support. The event hardly figured as news. Attention was riveted on the totally contradictory thrust of the new administration, sizing its military budget dramatically upward, intent on reversing the slippage in weaponry, wariness, and nuclear sophistication which President Reagan perceived as the careless legacy from previous administrations.

Admittedly, the nuclear "freeze" initiative has no enforcement leverage. Even if overwhelmingly approved, it has no legal status in Washinton or in Moscow. It is merely an expression of the public will; or, rather, of a public hope, at a time when hope is on the decline.

Without muscle, is it meaningless? Many think so. But the view of its supporters is that such an expression has an innate power of its own and can influence world opinion, as the demonstrations have done. The California outcome, either of signature-gathering by April 22 or of vote-winning by November 1982 is unpredictable, though insiders are aglow with confidence. This is the first time political action on this issue of nuclear weapons has been brought to the level of the ordinary voter.

Some points to note: This is a bilateral appeal, not a call for unilateral action by the U.S. It is not a "peace" movement. It does not ask disarmament nor even touch upon the issue of conventional arms, of defense budgets, of conscription, of the morality of war, of defense expenditures versus social needs. It focuses simply and exclusively on the horror implicit in mounting numbers of nuclearweapons and asks a bilateral end to this fuel for world incineration.

The measure states that there exists "substancial and growing danger of nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union which would result in millions of deaths. . ." This arsenal it says reduces national security rather than increasing it. So, "to reduce the threat of nuclear war" it calls on

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the leadership of both nations to reach an agreement "to halt the testing, production and further deployment of all nuclear weapons in a way that can be checked and verified by both sides." As first step, it asks the government of the U.S. to propose such an agreement to the government of the Soviet Union. Obviously the whole move anticipates other steps would follow: gradual nuclear disarmament, more negotiations, perhaps a diminished militarism. But the single focus here is on getting a halt, a "freeze."

Last summer, such a proposal would have seemed impertinent and naive, given the pell-mell rush to enhance U.S. military readiness. To most Americans it still may seem so. But European governments took seriously the alarms expressed by their citizens and in November President Reagan also responded. Whether or not some element of Soviet self-interest lurked in the background, the basic sincerity of those demonstrations affected German opinion and Bonn leadership and led President Reagan to his olive-branch speech, so unexpected the world is still weighing its import.

But that new presidential overture and even the present arms control negotiations do not satisfy "freeze" advocates. They persist in calling for a complete halt in new weapons development, in testing, in deployment. Everything. Stop right now! Raising this cry in the context of the on-going military rivalry would seem absurd, if it were not so universal a sentiment, so elemental a cry by mankind for survival. The power of that instinct is what the California campaign aims to rally and the ballot issue becomes a substantial instrument, a unifying center.

Two steps are involved. The first is well along. Even before the Dec. 1 formal start, literature was printed, pamphlets readied, a logo devised, organizations planned, supportive endorsements gathered. Funds, roughly $200,000, are being raised. Ready to go with "petition parties" around the state in December, volunteers are seeking half a million signatures. California law requires 346,000 properly registered voters must endorse a measure, to qualify it for the ballot: the half-million names will cover inaccurate or unregistered signers. Normally, volunteer efforts fall by the wayside. Getting so many names in so large a state is a staggering task. But public response looks promising.

Second step will be pursuit of favorable votes, once the proposal is on the ballot. Next summer, while Congress struggles with the national budget and attention is sharpest on military spending, California's quest for new governor, new U.S. Senator and new layers of other state officials promises to be intermeshed with the nuclear weapons issue.

A number of forces converge at this moment to propel the "freeze" campaign, forces not usually united in a voter appeal. These include: Catholic bishops, a growing number of politically active physicians, scientists including a number of Nobel Prize winners, and environmentalists. All have exceptionally strong bases in California. This combination, together with recruitment of minorities, labor, women's groups and businessmen provides a network reaching far beyond the habitual zealots and campus activists expected to figure in peace movements. Quite unlike the Vietnam war protests, the drive starts out with an air of respectability. Such was apparent when those involved in the initial announcement at a state capitol press conference included San Francisco's Archbishop John R. Quinn, University of California Nobel Laureate Donald Glaser, along with one of the "freeze" initiators, Mr. Willens.

Although Archbishop Quinn was not the first Catholic bishop to voice alarm at the nuclear arms race as a "crime against God and humankind," his remarks on Oct. 4, the Eight Hundreth anniversary of St. Francis of Assisi, had an electric effect, not only on the astonished congregation in his great Cathedral (who rose spontaneously to applaud) but on many others in the church.

"A 'just' nuclear war is a contradiction in terms," he said. "Nuclear weapons are not simply conventional weapons on a large scale. They are qualitatively of a whole different order of destructiveness. Their tremendous explosive force, as well as their enormous and terrible side effects, will irrevocably alter our ecological system, genetic structure for generations to come, and the fundamental fabric of our social system. . . ." "The teaching of the church is clear nuclear weapons and the arms race must be condemned as immoral."

Archbishop Quinn's commitment to work for a bilateral end to nuclear weapons and his specific advice to his own diocese to undertake work and prayer in that direction dramatized the church's involvement. He has already appointed three new diocesan employees to educate parishes and parochial schools full time on the nuclear threat and on the "freeze" initiatives. Cardinal Timothy Manning of Los Angeles has also spoken out. "Some maniac of a man," he said, may press the proper buttons, "and there will come an end to all time, for all the living and the dead. Is there no stopping this madness?" Other, though not all, California bishops have joined. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops meanwhile have a study of nuclear war underway, due to be completed next fall. The issue hovered noticeably over their recent meeting, so many bishops have already protested in other states against "this madness". . ."certain suicide". . ."folly of unbelievable dimensions."

Catholic bishops are not the only religious group involved, only the most unexpected. Core of the campaign is a religious network: the American Friends' Service Committee, the Ecumenical Peace Institute, Clergy & Laity Concerned, Pax Christi, a host of Unitarian, Lutheran, and Episcopal churches and numerous Jewish groups. Beyond formal endorsements, they have provided volunteers, organizers, and funds. In addition, the drive includes many of the usual liberal organizations, the American Civil Liberties Union, various Democratic clubs and some labor unions. Efforts are underway to engage minorities, a logic the military budget underscores.

The very locale of the campaign's headquarters suggests another layer of support. it is at 5480 College Avenue, Berkeley, where the store-front offices neighbor other "cause" and "issue" centers, along with wine and cheese shops, antique stores, bike and ski stores, all in the hospitable university

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ambience. Campus backing is a given. Scientists are prominant among the campaign's endorsements. This issue even stirs students from their apathy.

Down the street is Berkeley's Sierra Club office. This expansion environmental group, and its rival, Friends of Earth, have recently committed themselves to the "freeze" drive. Remarked Pam Nichols, who left the Sierra Club to become northern "freeze" manager, "Just being born gives one a stake in opposing nuclear weapons." The one group rejected as sponsors — politicians. Californians for a Bilateral Nuclear Arms Freeze want no one from government aboard, and no partisan influence.

Despite the singular focus on nuclear dangers and resistance to being classed as just another peace movement, the initiators of this drive come, logically enough, from past war protests.The key figures are three. Willens, a wealthy Los Angeles businessman, chairman of Factory Equipment Corp., has been active in various liberal causes, such as the McCarthy and McGovern presidential races, the Center for Defense Information and the Business Executives Against the Vietnam War. But quite apart is his passionate repugnance at nuclear weapons. In World War II as a Japanese translator for the U.S. Marine Corps, he was among the first Americans to view Hiroshima and Nagasaki after the bombs fell. "I was deeply moved at the time," he says. "But I didn't realize until later just how moved. . . ."

Working with him are Steve Ladd, San Francisco head of the War Resisters' League, a far younger activist whose University of California involvement in Vietnam war protests led him to a life-time dedication. Third is Ian Thiermann, a retired Los Angeles businessman, long-time Quaker and pacifist.

Thiermann's rare contribution came as a response to a conference stage by Physicians for Social Responsibility, a fast-growing national organization of the medical fraternity speaking out to prevent massive human damage which they recognize would be beyond doctors' ability to heal. So moved was Thiermann at the doctors' calm catalogue of the catastrophe inevitable after a nuclear bomb blast, that he with the aid of his film-maker son, super-imposed actual photgraphs from Hiroshima and Nagasaki over the taped track of conference speakers and the results was the overwhelming documentary, *The Last Epidemic*, which has gripped audiences all across the country and shocked the media into attention. This film and the intervention of the medical world is a powerful factor in the California drive.

Several local units of Physicians for Social Responsibility have refused a Pentagon request for systematic identification of hospital and medical facilities in their area available in the event of future military need, which the government anticipates, in its request, would be more massive in numbers and in trauma than ever before experienced in the U.S. In refusing to participate in such pre-planning, the physicians have replied that the request makes a false assumption, misleading the public, by its implication that any treatment would be possible after a nuclear exchange. Archbishop Quinn urged Catholic hospitals in his diocese to consider that response themselves.

Not all peace advocates supprt the "freeze" initiative. For instance, in Berkeley Robert Pickus, president of World Without War Council, which works to enlarge international understandings, scoffs at such a movement, built so obviously on fear. He considers the "freeze" proposal an indirect boost for the Soviets, a subtle assault on President Reagan and an erosion of U.S. military readiness.

Another World Without War activist, George Weigel of Seattle, columnist for the Catholic *Northwest Progress*, derides the "peace bishops" for repeating "errors of a failed peace movement" and for "fracturing" the Catholic community. Weigel's group would entice the Soviets into step-by-step conciliations, but it is still occupied with framing the steps.

Nevertheless, the stark simplicity of the "freeze" appeal reaches past political nuance and subtleties of international bargaining to stir a primitive clamor for humanity's survival, which may be the only response adequate to the apocalyptic threat. At this level, the common man may wish to cast a vote.

MARY ELLEN LEARY

(Mary Ellen Leary, a previous contributor, is a journalist who lives on the West Coast.)

Of several minds: *Abigail McCarthy*

FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

HOW ATTENTIVE TO THE SPIRIT?

THERE IS some reason these days to recall that story about one of Sean O'Faolain's Irish neighbors, who answered when queried as to the author's whereabouts, "Sean? Ah, he's in America sellin' us again." Catholics can well have had the same feeling this past year. Any number of writers have been selling us again. Books about current belief, about change, about our dissensions, about our statistics have been rolling from the presses. Novels with Catholic framework and local color, many written by priests with marvelous imaginations, sell steadily. And, at year's end, a veritable spate of volumes about the papacy and the church as institution were being reviewed severally or together in journals of criticism.

As the New Year dawned, Catholicism was in the headlines. In the dark drama of Poland, a political force, an integrating force. In a benumbed America, an uncertain voice, but a voice, raised to question the headlong rush toward nuclear warfare. For the moment, at least, Catholicism was good copy. At the heart of that

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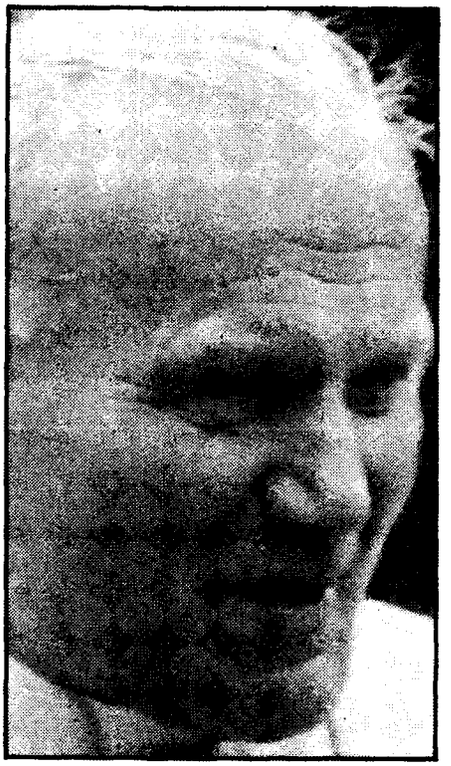
copy was the pope—our Polish pope. He continues to fascinate the doubters and the critics as well as his admirers. Even Malachi Martin, the title of whose book—*The Decline and Fall of the Roman Church*—speaks for itself (although he predicts the possibility of the church continuing as a purely spiritual force) sees the pope as the central religious figure of our time. Others—"They don't matter as John Paul matters." Writers who deplore his decisions still pay tribute to his intellectual powers. No secular news journal of any reputation ignores his statements. But . . . .

It is a rather large "but . . ." But what does all this mean, really mean, about the health and future of the church? What does it have to do with that core of faith around which each one of us may center life?

Part of the fascination with things Catholic is the deplorable, but very human, fascination with possibly approaching disaster. "Is the Catholic church, like the rest of society, finally falling apart? Or is it merely undergoing a traumatic transformation, its chaos a harbinger not of collapse but of new life?" asks reviewer Paul Piazza and says that it seems to be lying in ruins, its walls breached by new barbarian hordes.

We do not really know. We live with ambiguity and formlessness between two times—a past whose shapes linger but without substance and a future whose shapes we cannot discern. Our sympathy with John Paul II's passionate concern for his country does not quite conceal our questions as to whether his view of Catholicism is too limited by the Polish experience and whether the values he sees in the Catholicism there are as universal as he sees them.

The church in Poland seems strong and vital; it symbolizes well-springs of life and loyalty other than, and above and beyond, the state. It is equated with what John Paul often refers to, as he did on New Year's Day, Poland's "thousand-year-old culture." But is it a model for a church which can live in the hearts of the many in shifting societies who no longer need it, as their forefathers did, for identification or for a rallying point of like with like?



Nobel Prize Winner Czeslaw Milosz, who was born in Lithuania but reared and educated in Poland, points out in his *Native Realm* that there is a price to pay when religion is deeply wedded to a culture. After Poland had disintegrated as a country and a wounded nationalism had made its appearance, the notions of "Pole" and "Catholic" came to be equated. Polish culture developed entirely as a part of Roman Catholic Europe and within the orbit of the Vatican. The price: "when the line between national and religious behavior is erased, religion changes into a social power; it becomes conservative and conformist." An attempt to separate oneself from the milieu is seen as an attack on religion. Polish Catholicism had and has distinct traits. It is distinguished by an attachment to the liturgy. It is weak in Biblical tradition and hence, in the conception of Creation as dynamic, in the realization that "all things human not only are but become." It has, says Milosz, "a strong tendency to regard sin almost as if it were an offense against Roman law." Religion for the average Pole, he thinks, is rarely an inner experience because of the emphasis not only on collective celebrations and devotions, but on one's responsibility to collective organisms (the church, the country) which "thereby lightens the responsibility to concrete, living people."

American Catholics, whose forebears were immigrants from Catholic Europe—Irish-Catholics, German-Catholics, Italian-Catholics, Austrian-Catholics as well as Polish-Catholics—will find deep resonances in this description. It is very like the equating of nationality and religion which characterized them so strongly in the first and second generations, and the traits of the Catholicism they knew were very similar. It is illuminating to realize that the militant patriotism of most American Catholics probably had its roots in the same emphasis in their religious education on responsibility to the collective organism—and why we struggle now with the concept of justice for the poor, or any other persons, as a primary demand on conscience.

John Paul's concern and his theology transcend his native Catholicism—it would be gross simplification to say otherwise. But if, as I have heard it said, he has opted for a return to a more legalistic morality and for a faithful remnant, one must ask whether he looks back to the faith of his fathers and what is meant by faith-full in this context. Is it a faith which calls out in answer to the anguish at the heart of humanity today? Is it a faith which teaches us how to be human? Is it a faith which answers Thomas Merton's agonized cry from his hermitage: "Where is the church and where am I in the church?" (a question he could ask even while he affirmed that he stayed there "for my friends, my church, and all those I am one with").

These are questions we can ask. We can be grateful for the partial answers of a young and spiritually struggling Milosz: Catholicism is awesome in its immensity; one can accept it and suspend judgment; it is, after all, a human institution, "a hive of generations of men"—and "Catholicism's force lies in its many-sidedness, which is revealed not only in the course of history but also in the successive phases of an individual life." All good enough for the individual—but in this time between times we must summon all our hope that the church *qua* church is totally attentive to the Spirit.

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

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TOUGHER QUESTIONS FROM INSIDE THE OTHER'S WORLD

Is there life after ecumenism?

DAVID TOOLAN

IN LATE SEPTEMBER, just back from the annual meeting in New York City of the North American Academy of Ecumenists, I asked the two extraordinary diocesan priests with whom I live where they thought the movement toward Christian unity stood. "On hold," replied one, and then the subject, apparently lacking interest, was quickly dropped. Fresh from meeting Cynthia Wedel, the effervescent president of the World Council of Churches, and so many other hard-working ecumenists in the last two months, I was somewhat peeved by my colleagues'—perhaps typical—indifference. In all honesty, though, I had to admit ecumenism doesn't fire me either, at least not as it once did when I was an eager S.M.U. graduate student, among the first of a flood of Jesuits to be "released" to study at Protestant divinity schools. Absorbing Methodist theologian Albert Outler's suspenseful eye-witness tales of how the shrewd tactics of Cardinals Liénart, Frings, Döpfner, and König outwitted the sly Cardinal Tisserant—and set the Catholic church on an amazing, unpredictable new course—that was adventure!

It was also adventure bordering on revelation to assimilate, as many of us then did living with "separated brethren" and sisters, the Protestant principle—that Luther and Calvin were for us "doctors of the church" too—and to find, out of contrast, our Catholic substance freshly illuminated. I went, I soon discovered, a "Roman"; I came away, I think, more richly catholic.

What's happened to the movement? What's holding things up? The most obvious answer, from the Catholic standpoint at least, is that the adventure of ecumenism has become an in-house affair. The problem of pluralism, some theologians call it—that almost Hindu polyphony and fissiparousness of contemporary Catholicism. To others, like Graymoor Friar William F. Lewis writing in the October issue of *Ecumenical Trends*, religious diversity is less a "problem" than the inspired means by which, historically, oppressed groups like the Amish, American Indians, poor Hispanics and blacks, have achieved social renewal, made spiritual breathing room for themselves. "Ecumenical zealots" are suspect; religious pluralism is positive, a sign of the "Spirit who blows where it will."

However one defines the issue, though, the point is that one need scarcely go beyond the boundaries of today's Catholicism to discover a multiplicity of worlds—going down hard or easy. Is this, all this, my body—or Christ's?, we want to know. If the answer's yes, it's Christ's body, it decidedly does spell a bending out of traditional shape, more catholicity for some, at least a temporary loss of identity for others. The latter is what well-bounded, "disturbed" church people fear. Is there life after this death of the denominational self? Can our bodies stand the expansion? The debate's about that—what we will stomach. For meditators of the Pauline epistles and the *Acts of the Apostles*, the protests on all sides ought to sound familiar.

After fourteen years of remarkably successful official bilateral dialogue, and a mixed bag of equally stunning exchanges among congregations at the grass roots level, the ecumenical movement flounders—understandably. At the same time, after my recent conventioneering, I'm here to tell you the movement's far from dead. For one thing, theologians of the different traditions are now deep enough inside each other's skin so that there's no offense in the "outsider" questioning the keystones of fraternal kingdoms. Both the floundering and the tougher questions were evident at the New York NAAE meeting in September, and also, in late August, at the international meeting, outside Montreal, of Jesuit ecumenists representing some thirty-six countries.

FIRST the floundering. It's important to note where it lies, and where it doesn't. At both conferences, you could see that the locus of discussion had shifted forward, from the classic, historical issues that had once divided us to the unset-

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tling problematic of contemporary faith that has little to do with denominational position. The lines between confessions developed since the original schisms are increasingly fluid. Conservative Lutherans and conservative Catholics, for instance, are likely to resemble each other—and the divisions lie between them and in-house liberals, whose scriptural and historical scholarship increasingly agrees. When theologians disagree these days, it's rarely along confessional lines, but along professional, academic ones. For what creeds once divided, culture, scholarly method, has united. So what's the quandary for present-centered, invariably liberal ecumenists? It's that this common culture also puts faith, both its meaning and its truth, in eclipse—and please note, for nearly all churches in roughly the same ways. Whether theoretician or activist, the issue is spiritual depth, penetrating to roots.

Among other consortiums modeling this new situation of a shared, troubled faith is the ecumenically "collegial" Workgroup on Constructive Christian Theology sponsored since 1977 by St. John's (Collegeville) Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research. Each member brings the strengths—and weaknesses—of his or her own tradition to what is recognized as a common theological enterprise. Thus one of the first topics considered was the modern problem of evil, a theme indifferent to church membership, a context we're all in like the proverbial boat. As with other themes they might have chosen, the floundering here is collective—a sense of primitive "defilement" or "stain," says an initial Workgroup report (*Occasional Papers*, Collegeville, Sept., 1981), that afflicts prosperous Westerners regardless of confessional stance. And that means ecumenists too.

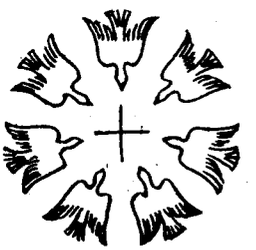
All of which has much to do with the more visible source of confusion in the ecumenical agenda: the overriding socio-economic issues, liberation theology, and El Salvador *et al.* have brought to the table. In Montreal, the "third church" was bodily present and yes, disruptive of doctrinal European-American concerns, in the form of Jesuits from Africa and Southeast Asia—and the Santa Claus presence of Father Cesar Jerez ("As a Latin, socialism would be too dull"), Jesuit provincial of Central America. Nor were survival rights to food and decent work, or the plight of refugees, ever far out of sight at the New York meeting. Clearly, this new set of post-modern "political" questions had thrown both groups of ecumenists off strike. The present had come down hard; ecumenists, like the rest of us, are gathering their wits.

On more familiar ground, however, the ecumenical movement has manifestly reached the mature stage of asking tougher questions from *inside* the other's world. (On the inter-religious front, Eugene B. Borowitz's Jewish response to contemporary christologies [reviewed *Commonweal,* Sept. 10, 1981] is a sample of what's afoot.) My favorite example from the New York meeting was William H. Lazareth, the new director of the World Council's Faith and Order Commission, who is now questioning the Orthodox as to whether, given the gender-neutral meaning of *anthropos* at Nicea and Chalcedon, they're really being "orthodox" in the practice of excluding women from the ministry. Though less conspicuous than before, the *quality* of ecumenical dialogue is actually improving. The era of euphoric fellowship has done its work, made it possible to put better questions.

Equally illustrative of this shift in depth, on a front closer to home, was last March's address by Dr. Robert Runcie, Archbishop of Canterbury, at the Catholic cathedral of Westminster in London. After bilateral dialogue in which virtual Anglican-Catholic unanimity has been reached on Eucharist, ministry, and authority in the church, Runcie wanted to know "what range of diversity is compatible with unity, or . . . what are the limits of diversity?" Is there space, in other words, for the Anglican church order within the Roman order—with its authoritarian, centralizing tendencies? Can there be unity without nullifying absorption, he asks. It did not escape Runcie's attention that in light of "the new confidence of the non-European cultures . . . unity in inescapable diversity is now a pressing (issue) for the Roman church." Nor did he miss that, as Ernst Käsemann has written, "The New Testament canon does not, as such, constitute the foundation of the unity of the church. On the contrary, as such, it provides the basis for the multiplicity of confessions." The Archbishop was candid enough to admit Rome would properly have tough questions to ask Anglicans, viz., whether their famous "comprehensiveness" did not conceal many an inadmissible self-contradiction. So be it.

What's clear is that Protestants, with the Orthodox just behind them, are queuing up on this one: assuming agreement on the fundamentals of the faith—and though too much a guarded secret among church elites, years of bilateral dialogue have assured this to a remarkable degree—how much diversity in sacramental practice and ministry will the Catholic church tolerate—even encourage? In effect, the answer to this question is being worked out—and telegraphed to other Christian "ecclesial bodies"—by current struggles within the church. Signals are being sent, ominous ones, by the Küng and Schillebeeckx cases, by the pope's refusal to celebrate an indigenous African liturgy, by the Dutch synod and other attempts to strong-arm national and regional conferences of bishops, and by the treatment of the Uniate churches, The "mood in Rome," insiders at both conferences assured me, is "not auspicious."

At the New York meeting, the courtly Father Jerome Vereb, O.P., of the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, insisted it wasn't so. No one I spoke to believed him. "More Walt Disney," quipped one auditor. But consider: the fact that Protestant church leaders are now pressing Rome on the issue of legitimate diversity proclaims loud and clear just how confident they are of substantial common ground with



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Catholics. It's a measure of how *successful* the dialogue has been that at least for Anglicans, and perhaps Lutherans, advancing the question of diversity shows a readiness to consider seriously some flexible form of juridical communion—which might be as hard to swallow for their own congregations as it is for inelastic Rome. Short of full juridical union, of course, lies the intermediate device of formal "covenant" between churches, a public acknowledgment of agreement at the roots of faith and a pact to collaborate in social action—a model on the way to intercommunion that thus far (only) local congregations have pioneered.

THAT CHRISTIAN diversity is the issue of the hour, and that at least some Catholic elites are entirely comfortable with it, was shown by one leading question on the agenda of the Jesuit Montreal conference: what changes in the Roman Catholic church appear desirable to restore Christian unity? Among other proposals, Jesuits were discussing one by Father Bernard Sesböüe of France to radically decentralize church structure by dividing up the western (Roman) patriarchate. (The ease with which such a prospect was contemplated, in some form even foreseen as inevitable and healthy for the papacy itself, showed how little Jesuit identity is now wedded to a church order we helped to create. There's confident life after the death of the post-tridentine psyche, so I heard here.)

If Sesböüe's suggestion seemed impractical, as it did to many, especially with Pope John Paul II assertively reigning, the point was not lost—that somehow, someway, the Petrine office needed major revision. Few thought this likely to occur at Vatican initiative; it would come, a matter of time, as regional and national conferences of bishops assume, and assert, more autonomy vis à vis Rome. On the ecumenical front, this ought to mean that Catholic bishops, realizing that the dialogue locally has surpassed the international one, will feel pastorally obligated to act according to the religious climate within their own jurisdictions—without thinking it necessary that the church everywhere need be at the same stage for real leading edges to consolidate themselves. A disarmingly simple idea, "unity by stages" may be one of those notions destined to break logjams at the top. The theology justifying it, implicit in Vatican II and much developed since, is already in place. All that's needed is episcopal "spirit"—and more attention, on the part of Protestants and Orthodox, to national/regional episcopal conferences rather than Rome.

Meanwhile, my impression is that many Protestant leaders await, if not the sacrament of communion, at least some sacramental gesture from Rome and national bishops' conferences—like the "covenanting" mentioned above—to publicly mark, and celebrate, the very real bonding in faith already achieved. What's happened in these fruitful bilateral dialogues demands some great, symbolic calling attention to—and by tradition, we Catholics ought to know how to put on the kind of headline-catching street theater the situation calls for. But thus far, ironically, what Protestants have for the most part gotten from Rome and the bishops is words, preachment with little embodiment.

Somehow, at least *this* pope does not seem yet to realize that at least for a large portion of mainstream Protestant elites—and if his U.S. visit was any index, for much of the populace besides—he is already their spokesman, their pope, the most powerful and visible Christian voice in the world today. When he addresses the UN, when he dresses down a Marcos or the Brazilian generals, when he evokes Lazarus in a Yankee Stadium, he speaks to and for them—and is also, in some as yet undefined way, answerable to them as well as his cradle-constituency. (Cf. Stanley Hauerwas & Robert Wilken, *Commonweal*, Feb. 15, 1980.) Apparently, John Paul is not hearing this message. Symbolic of this deafness, perhaps, the Gregorian University in Rome, in a distinctive way *the* pontifical think-tank par excellence, has no Protestant faculty members these days. The few once there, I was told, "didn't work out; abused the privilege; hurt the church by being critical"—by being themselves, I thought, "protesting." Like St. Paul maybe, or Catherine of Siena.

Golden opportunities for incarnate gesture have been missed. For instance, last year when a joint Lutheran-Catholic commission had completed its 450th anniversary study of Melanchthon's conciliatory Augsburg Confession, Cardinal Jan Willebrands, president of the Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity, saluted the creed for presenting "a basis for the common confession of central doctrinal truths . . . more deeply rooted than any division." The German bishops and Pope John Paul II later confirmed the judgment; on this basis, Catholics and Lutherans spoke with a common voice. But what are the practical implications of such a "consensus of the faith?" the Lutheran World Federation asked this past August 10. Like many another agreement on fundamentals hammered out over the last decade, this one, too, carried none. Catholics were not even urged, as many had hoped, to make the Augsburg Confession their own, to use it liturgically. It's disheartening; official Roman Catholic words have begun to sound empty: the ecumenical *will* is flagging.

So what's holding things up in Rome? My guess is it's what Protestants tend to consider rather secondary formalities in the "hierarchy of truths" Vatican II's Decree on Ecumenism professed, and which Rome, following the Scholastic adage that form follows substance, regards as revealing irreconcilable differences—things like different sacramental practice (once a month or year?), forms of ministry (ah, women!), and church order (ugh, congregationalism!). Instinctively then, Rome mistrusts the reliability of (merely) conceptual agreements reached on the first three articles of the creed; the central bone of contention being the fourth article, the church—and plural ecclesiologies, plural ways of convening and cultivating a distinctively trinitarian vision and action in the world. The purport of Dr. Runcie's question, his claim for "unity not absorption," has not been missed. Rome knows only too well that swallowing that claim would bend it out of shape—which it would. But Rome's nose is already out of joint from sniffing similar protestantizing claims among its own faithful, conspicuously in the mounting argument over the people's "right to a priest," to Eucharist, which Pope John

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Paul II judges to lie at the heart of matters Catholic. Sooner than Protestant diplomatic pressure, this acute internal bind is likely to move the question of diversity forward—and rather rapidly I should think.

OF COURSE Rome is not wrong to think these differences in sacramental practice and church order matter extremely. They do. As Alfred North Whitehead once saw, the most distinctive thing about Christianity consists in its doctrine of divine immanence: the unseen Hebrew God's face and voice visible and audible in Jesus, and the interiority of Spirit to created materiality in general. But this means, subjectively, that *the* question for aspirant Christians is: by what path, by what means (of grace), does one discover, first-hand, the splendor hidden "from all eternity," both imm*a*nent and imm*i*nent, in and over our earth, our flesh—the question of "spiritual depth" I referred to at the outset. For as H. Richard Niebuhr's classic *Christ and Culture* demonstrated, diverse Christian attitudes toward culture, toward those educing means of cultivating one "spirit" or another, testify to substantial differences on how, and whether, the Triune God makes its presence felt, is "in" or "out," lost or found, in material events.

Some forms, argued Niebuhr—witness Tolstoy, Ritschl, Aquinas, Luther, Augustine, and F.D. Maurice for samples—run short of the whole story, stress one trinitarian pole (perhaps appropriate for the time, not for another) at the expense of the other, and thus witness—at best—to but a third of the truth. Read-out historically and dialectically, as it must be, this means that no generation of Christians can escape the windy imperative to discern the context-specific promising goods and unpromising evils of its age, and accordingly, make *theological* choices in embodying Christian witness in limited ways for and against. No less true, subsequent generations facing a different set of circumstances will be inspired to undo the consolidations of their ancestors. And the whole point is that in this tail-chasing historical game, conserving kings would be lost without visionary prophets, and vice-versa—and both would perish of chronic "realism" or utopianism without hieratic time-off to celebrate what already is; yin-yang, troublesome diversity is treasure to be conserved. Catholics need Quakers, and so forth.

In a way then, to make agreement on sacramental and institutional order the prerequisite for intercommunion strikes me as correct in principle. It's Rome's cyclopian way of strongly asserting, against "Protestant" spiritualism and me-and-God privatism, against an overly hieratic and politically withdrawn "Orthodoxy," its central principle of *incarnation*—and with that the essentially *social*, and yes—if we want to make an earthly difference—the *institutional* consequence of authentic Christian conversion. The plank in Rome's eye that prevents it from appreciating the specific, cultivated "virtues" of other Christian ways of incarnating themselves, on the other hand, is its own post-tridentine monstrosity, its over-developed centralization and authoritarianism. And yet, in suffering (not enjoying) intercommunion with an Archbishop Lefebvre or a Hans Küng, "base communities," women on the Pill, and (who knows?) "communal Catholics"—and, less publicized, with most of the very "protestant" lay Catholic students I once taught in Buffalo, New York—the Vatican has tacitly stretched far to answer Dr. Runcie with a reluctant "Yes, there's room." For though Rome's current mood is that of the turtle who's "overextended" its head, ecumenical intercommunion is already, within our own shell, a fait accompli.

So yes, if you look to Rome, my colleagues were right to say things are "on hold"—though even there, behind the stonewalling, there's more movement, last-ditch efforts I incline to think, than appears. Nonetheless, ecumenists are a dauntless lot, even incorrigible. At nearly every ecumenical convention these days, like the two I have reflected on here and the National Council of Churches' "ecumenical event" in Cleveland, held on November 5-7, there's much talk of Dr. Lewis Mudge and Dr. William Jerry Boney's proposal to seize the dawning day of the third millennium in the year 2000 with a vast assembly representing all Christians "on the way" to a truly ecumenical council. Reflecting the "third church" concerns I mentioned earlier on, the idea is to reconceive and adapt for the occasion the ancient Israelite idea of a Jubilee Year (of Leviticus 25) and the "acceptable year of the Lord" (of Lk 4) to take up the central issues of justice and peace. It would recognize that institutions like the World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic church are intermediate, penultimate forms of the one church in process of formation in every place—and participants would be asked to think on behalf of the people of God in the place where they live. Planning for such a thing, Mudge and Boney dream, might refocus and galvanize the sluggish ecumenical movement into action again, and in so doing, create the conditions for a genuinely ecumenical council.

Haven't we Roman Catholics just had two ecumenical councils in the past century or so? The answer is no, time does not stand still nor does the world we must include, recognize. We've had one very parochial council to order things in our ghetto world (Vatican I) and another (Vatican II), as the saying goes, to "perform surgery without anesthetic on a patient who thought he was in the best of health"—which acknowledged *ex post facto* we were in the modern world. Since then, however, we've discovered we're in a *post*-modern world which is both more hospitable to faith and more menacing than anything avoided or faced in 1870 or 1966. Sooner or later, then, we'll want to voice, within an encompassing Yes, a dismantling No to this post-modern world. Why do so with less than as catholic a chorus as by all signs stands available and willing—without the other Christian voices, like the Texas Methodists who in the sixties taught me so much, who would join us? Just because the time is ripe for such communion, just because the differences indispensably matter, and just because we know that even this ecumenical thrust will be in-house, but dress-rehearsal for the challenge of world religions already so much with (and against) us, let us seize the day. With a Yes, "*this* too is my body."

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Experiencing the Resurrection

SEBASTIAN MOORE

FOR SOME YEARS now it has seemed to me that the most important question for soteriology is "What were the experiences of the disciples of Jesus that climaxed in the realization that he was risen from the dead, and what was the climactic experience itself?" It was out of this climactic experience that the Good News was proclaimed. It was the experience itself that was proclaimed, as the new condition of freedom, peace and joy that God was creating on this earth. "What *was* the experience?" is, then, *the* soteriological question.

People to whom I explain my approach to the resurrection say "Your approach is like that of Schillebeeckx, isn't it?" Yes it is. My *approach* is the same as his. For both of us the center of gravity, so to speak, of the resurrection is the experience of the disciples. Both of us have found necessary a shift from the old approach, in which the risen state of Jesus is clearly established—for the disciples of course, even in that approach their experience was a necessary element—by the appearing of Jesus, who eats fish and blesses bread, and by the empty tomb.

The shift is necessary, for two reasons. On the one hand, the scripture scholars have come to understand that the appearance stories are not circumstantial accounts but stories devised to illustrate faith in the risen one; they can't be taken at face value as can the account of the crucifixion. On the other hand, a better *theological* understanding had led to a far greater emphasis on the spiritual experience involved in encountering the risen one. The disciple to whom Jesus makes himself known puts far more into the experience than does the experiencer of a common event. He or she is being invited into faith, solicited at that deep level where consent may be given or withheld.

In short, the scholars say the appearance stories are stories of newborn faith, and the more interesting theologians are happy to have it that way. We've all had enough of a "resurrection" that was as empirically grounded as it was spiritually arid.

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But this creates a problem. The resurrection has, from the beginning, been believed to establish Jesus as the Christ, Alpha and Omega, Judge of the living and the dead, bearer of the name that is above every other name. With the *knowing* of the resurrection now deemed to be a spiritual experience of the disciples, and not like Columbus sighting the new land, what could have been the spiritual experience that demanded the amazing total utterance; "Jesus is Lord of living and dead, at the right hand of the Power, etc."? That's a tough one. Schillebeeckx tries to answer this question, and so do I.

Now here is the answer I came up with last year. I recalled, and reread, a story that had moved me profoundly, *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles. The story begins with "Gene," the author, visiting his old military academy on a dank November day, seeking out "the tree." Eventually he finds it—very ordinary-looking, and only distinguished from the neighboring trees by climbing-irons up one side. We then flash back down the years, to Gene as a youth at the academy, coming completely under the influence of Finney, his opposite in every respect, daredevil athlete whereas Gene was bookish. One evening, when Gene was coming to realize that through following Finney he was losing study-time and was in danger of flunking, Finney banged on his door as usual and said it was time for their evening "dare." This consisted in climbing the tree together, the first one up inching along a branch that hung out over the river, and jumping off into the water. This time Finney went first. And as he was inching along the branch, Gene, just behind him on the branch, bounced, so that Finney lost balance and fell to the ground shattering both legs. Gene's action came from a moment of sudden uncontrollable resentment. Soon after, resistant to all treatment, Finney died.

My fantasy was, that if, on that later visit, Finney had appeared to Gene, whole and laughing, and embraced him, that would be an image of the way Jesus came to the disciples—who, as Schillebeeckx frequently repeats, had "left him in the lurch."

I still think it's a good image, but—rather obviously, I now see—such a beautiful and haunting experience of reconciliation with the dead is hardly enough to make of the lost one the Alpha and Omega. More specifically, the inadequacy of the image lies in this, that the only resources on which the experience draws is the capacity of the psyche to dream up the

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beautiful reconciling image of Finney. It is not required that Finney himself be present, made whole in and through death. And everything, it seems to me, points to the necessity of *just such* a presence of Jesus to ground the resurrection Kerygma. Everything demands it: principally that even the Master looks to be "perfected" in death—if there be such a perfecting. All that the Master has said and done and been is *still subject* to the huge question mark of death, still "under death," still under judgment. "What has happened *to him*?" is a question that has to be asked, with the utmost realism, by the disciple whom he has led beyond the horizons of this world but has nevertheless seen him disappear over the world's horizon. The resurrection Kerygma says that *he is now* where all this—the teaching, the doing, the living, the total Jesus-intentionality—was headed: with the infinite Godhead. It is a statement about Jesus now, about the present and enduring state of Jesus. And it is a statement of where death brought Jesus. And no psychic experience, of the reconciliation-with-the-past kind, is sufficient to ground it.

It seems to me that Schillebeeckx is still held, as I was last year, in the reconciliation-with-the-past model. The most formal statement he makes of his extremely nuanced position is: "May it not be that Simon Peter—and indeed the Twelve—arrived via their concrete experience of forgiveness after Jesus' death, encountered as grace and discussed among themselves (as they remembered Jesus' sayings about, among other things, the gracious God) at the 'evidence for belief': the Lord is alive?" (*Jesus: An Experiment in Christology*, p. 391, Crossroad, $27.50, 736 pp.)

What the disciples "have going for them" after Golgotha, in this view, is: the recollection of Jesus, and the enormous intensification of this through a *conversion* experience produced—and Schillebeeckx would insist on this—by the Holy Spirit. Could it be known from such a recollection-with-conversion that Jesus is the Judge of all humankind?

I would absolutely agree that a conversion experience, produced by the Holy Spirit, is the sufficient and only "receiver" for the resurrection encounter. The question really is: how must Jesus be thematic to that conversion experience—as "he whom we left in the lurch but whose whole life proclaimed forgiveness"? Certainly, but is this enough, is that the nub of the matter? The content of such a supernatural conversion experience would be "We know that Jesus has forgiven us our failure of him." Schillebeeckx tries to get from this to "Jesus is the Judge of the living and the dead": "It is the individual's experience of new being that imparts to faith the assurance that Jesus is alive or is the coming judge of the world." (*Jesus*, p. 392)

That 'or' is quite something! Still, the conversion of the disciple is the point: Schillebeeckx has seen this, and we must never forget it. But how does Jesus figure as content to that experience? A bereaved husband may well receive a supernatural assurance that his wife has forgiven him an injury. A cousin of mine, a holy though eccentric person, received while she was praying a deep, quiet, and absolute assurance ("It was exactly as though I'd been there") that my brother, a submarine captain drowned in World War II, had made his peace with God. But the *content* of her prayer experience was "the reconciliation of my brother." It was not "that he is the Lord of all!"

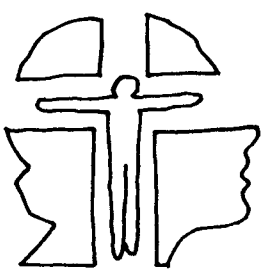
IN HIS LONG exegetical sifting of the texts, where he and I are dependent on the experts, Schillebeeckx reaches the conclusion that "the resurrection was believed in before there was any question of appearances" (*Jesus*, p. 354). Supposing that he is right, and that therefore we may not invoke *any* appearance, and "coming before them," of Jesus to ground the resurrection Kerygma, then *all* we have as ground is their conversion experience. So the question becomes most urgent: how could their conversion experience have for its *content* "that Jesus, having died, is *now* taken into the Godhead"? That, it seems to me, is *the* resurrection question for the contemporary theologian.

Conversion takes many forms, because it takes you where you are. Where the disciples were was "dead, in a manner that broke out of the category of 'symbolic death' because their radical desire had met death in Jesus its awakener and focus, and where our radical desire meets death, that is real death, our death." Hold on! I'm going to explain that.

The two most important facts about us are that we desire and that we die. I think we intuit a connection between these two facts—vaguely and very inattentively. Our desire knows no limit, and our natural "psychic picture" of death is of the falling-away of all connections, all bonds — in fact, of all limits. The image of Hades or of Sheol witnesses to this psychic picture, this "soul in space" (the title of a short poem of Rilke's on death). But we have no experience of death *as* the delimiting of desire. We do not know anyone who had died. This means that we live short of that total fulfillment which religious faith leads us to hope for: short, that is, of its indispensable threshold.

Now suppose that, by some extraordinary means, someone were to cross that threshold while still alive. They would know what the dead know: that total emptiness which *only* the absolute world-creating power could fill. So they would know that if they did then experience fullness and joy and peace, that could only *be* the presence of this power. Their conversion, the conversion of the dead, would be uniquely revelatory of that power.

I believe that the disciples of Jesus did cross that threshold and there experience the all-transforming power. My reason for this belief is as follows. Jesus, the "new man" free of the captivity of sin, knew desire in its liberated state where it



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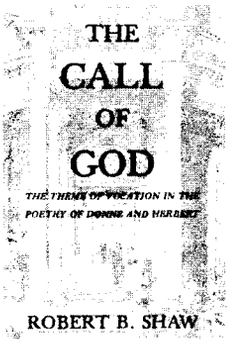
hungers, singly and all-consumingly, for God. This condition was what James P. Mackey calls a "contagion" which the disciples caught from Jesus. Now desire experienced in this total and life-transcending form would be *so new* for the disciples that they would be quite unable to handle it by themselves: it would be wholly *vested* in Jesus: the awakener of the desire becomes its symbol. This phenomenon is present with all charismatic leaders: how much more so must it have been present in the case of Jesus. Now this will mean that the catastrophic and horrible end of Jesus, the *container,* the vessel of their desire ("Heart of Jesus, desire of the eternal hills" I remember from a distant Catholic past) would bring their desire into that total crisis of desire that death will be for us, into that total emptying of the soul which only the infinite can succeed.

IF THE SPIRIT enlivened them, converted them, in *that* condition, if they experienced superabundant divine life as coming out of the death to which they had been reduced, then the center, the focus, of this life-out-of-death would have to be *Jesus* alive-out-of-death, his mission God-approved, his death God-intended, his final state God-outpouring, spirit-giving. John's *story* (remember our self-denying ordinance as regards the appearances) of the risen Jesus breathing on them and saying "receive the Holy Spirit" would then be a dramatization of the experience, by the newly enspirited disciples, of Jesus brought before them by the Spirit as the center and principle of the new life that God was bringing out of death. And when Paul speaks of "the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead," he could mean "the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead *for you,* that brought you to life with Jesus as your luminous center." And when he says that, dead as we were, "God brought us to life with Christ," he could be referring to the post-Golgotha conversion, of which God is the agent, Spirit is the heart's felt moving, and Jesus is the radiant center. And the whole Pauline idea of the believer as spiritually concorporate with the risen one would have this same referent: of those original men and women coming out of death in the Spirit around the Master. The great Pauline Spirit-resurrection texts take on the kind of sense I am groping for, once it is understood that the Holy Spirit, for Paul, is never a merely believed-in divine agent, but an experienced reality, a felt total newness of life. The more we understand the Holy Spirit as raising *the disciples* from the dead, the more we understand this new Spirit-life as concentrating for them in the crucified one whose death brought them beyond our limits into the "waste and void" where only the Spirit of God creates and has for his primary creation the new Jesus, focus of the new faith.

One might move on from Schillebeeckx's position to the one I am groping for by saying that while the disciples did "leave Jesus in the lurch," much more importantly *he* left *them* in the lurch, where God alone could pick them up, where what picked them up could only *be* God, his Spirit filling their hearts with the joyous certainty that he who had failed them was now the new and eternal human being with whom they were "seated in the heavenly places."

COWLEY



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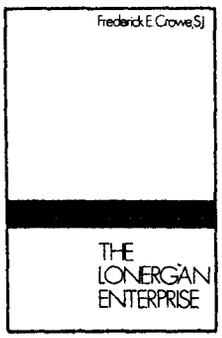

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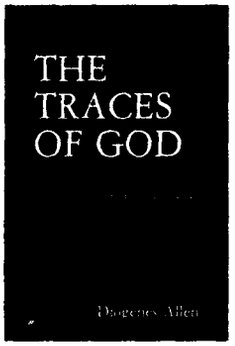

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Stage

FR. TIM, SISTER SADE

ANGUISH & ANGER

SHORTLY AFTER the phenomenal success of *Going My Way* in 1944, strangers took to stopping Barry Fitzgerald on the street to tell that Protestant boyo that only a good Catholic like him could have been so convincing as the crochety old priest. I take comfort in that bit of show-business history as I set out to review for the readers of *Commonweal* two plays on — stretch a point — Catholic education.

Going My Way came to mind, I suppose, because *Mass Appeal* concerns the confrontation between a priest and a seminarian (in the film it was a younger priest). Although *Mass Appeal* has its share of soft sentiment and easy laughs, Bill C. Davis's play wants to do something more than wring our hearts. Father Tim Farley is a likable and well-liked priest, a teller of cozy tales and comfortable jokes, whose ministry is based on desire to sidestep disturbing situations and issues. The insulated life he has built for himself is not as easeful as he pretends it is, and he uses wine, the thoughtful gift of appreciative parishioners, to disguise the truth from himself; it would be easier to take seriously this somewhat genteel version of the whiskey priest if the author and the director (Geraldine Fitzgerald) did not play his multiple wine caches as an audience-pleasing joke. Mark Dolson is a prickly young man, who does good, speaks his mind and manages to upset both Father Farley's congregation and the staff of the seminary. Father Farley, a street preacher in his youth, sees some of his lost fervor in Mark and sets out to educate (domesticate) him enough to let him survive the seminary and achieve ordination because — he says at a first-act curtain — the church needs such lunatics.

Michael O'Keefe, who did such a good job as the son in *The Great Santini*, told a New York *News* interviewer recently that he likes the role of Mark Dolson because it gives him a chance to play a character who is not having an identity crisis: "He knows where he's been, what he wants and is absolutely straightforward." I suspect that that is a limitation in the play, that Mark should be learning even as his implacability leads the priest to face himself. There are suggestions now and then that such a process is underway — moments of pleased response to Father Farley — but Mark's role is exemplary in this story of the teacher taught. Father Farley cannot save Mark from the official disapproval of the head of the seminary, but he does speak out at the end, risks offending his parishioners not only by defending Mark but by exposing his own loss of faith and the concomitant withdrawal from genuine human contact. Early in the play he discusses the significance of St. Francis's undressing in the street and, at the end, he divests himself of his robes, steps out of the pulpit and speaks the saint's words directly to the congregation/audience, "Let us begin."

Milo O'Shea's Father Farley, whether he is in the parlor or in the pulpit, is a nicely conceived character, at once funny and defensive, but—even though the final moments are theatrically effective—I have a little trouble feeling, believing in his spiritual anguish. Similarly, it is not easy to accept Mark Dolson as the "man of compassion" O'Keefe says he is. One of the difficulties is that so much is told us in the play and not enough shown us. We get the biographies of the two men; we get direct statements about Father Farley's loss of faith, about Mark's love for the people in the congregation. There is no evidence on stage of either Father Farley's past or Mark's present faith. I do not presume to know how a playwright and his performers can convey such a thing, but one might begin by listening to Robert Donat's voice break on Thomas à Becket's "soul's sickness" speech in the recording of *Murder in the Cathedral*. The comparison may be unfair; matters of deep spiritual signficance may be easier to envision, to hear in Canterbury just before the martyrdom than in an urban Irish parish over a glass of the bubbly. The dramatic truth of *Mass Appeal*, the quality that makes it so attractive as a theater piece, lies in the relationship between the two men, the slow-growth of respect, affection, love even, and the sense of loss when Mark's high expectations of the older man are disappointed. It is a familiar enough human encounter—father-son, teacher-student—and the play is successful somewhere to the secular side of its deeper concerns.

The church that has created and been created by Father Farley in *Mass Appeal*, that cries out for Mark's lunatic, for the new beginning, is an institution that has been trivialized to make God and Christ charmingly accessible as in a television advertisement which elicits faith (in a soap powder, say) by preaching through entertainment. Mark complains that his Sunday school teacher used *Peanuts* as a text so diligently that he thought for years that Christ was a beagle; Father Farley announces with regret that Sister Rosalie's Maryknoll Marionettes will not be able to perform the morning service. In David's title there are many puns. These jokes may not be exaggerations, but they represent only the idiot end of a continuum which, in its healthier sections, would free the church from old rigidities which have less to do with doctrine than with the political,social, sexual prejudices of the men and women who confuse spiritual leadership with martinetism. One such creature can be found in Christopher Durang's *Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All for You*. In the curtain raiser to the play, *The Actor's Nightmare*—a standard Durang parody pastiche which, against my better judgment, I often found funny—the baffled protagonist talks about having been an altar boy and about all the people he knows who went to Catholic school; he adds, almost as an afterthought, "I don't know any Catholic adults." *Sister Mary Ignatius* explains why. I can imagine a devastating comedy about the worst aspects of Catholic education, c. 1950, but Durang is more cartoonist than comedian. His Sister Mary Ignatius, played

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with a fine touch of malevolent lunacy by Elizabeth Franz, is pure caricature, and often very funny in the early sections of the play when she answers, edits, or ignore questions that have presumably been handed in by the audience. The scenes with the little boy are less successful whether she is surreptitiously fondling him or rewarding him with cookies for knowing his catechism; if it were not for Franz's air of unending surprise, the latter joke would have become tedious much earlier than it does. The play goes to pieces with the arrival of the accusatory former students, particularly the one who hates Sister Mary Ignatius because she believed the teacher; as presented here the nun has the credibility of Miss Piggy in love. Durang retreats from direct didacticism into black farce as the pistol-toting Sister Ignatius starts knocking off her pedagogical failures. It is possible that Durang believes that there is a mass murderer hidden in every knuckle-rapper or—to make a metaphor of his demonic finale—that Catholic education of this variety is destructive. I suspect something less serious. Judging by these two plays and the earlier *A History of the American Film*, Durang is a satirist whose vision is impaired by two many years of pop culture and an impulse to go for the gag instead of the jugular.

GERALD WEALES

Screen

DELAYED REACTIONS

MY TEN BEST FOR '81

I ADMIT it's a little late, but I've decided to announce my ten-best list for 1981. Actually, it's a little late for me to do any ten-best lists, ever, since the last time I did one was ten years ago. Several late-breaking developments have encouraged me to take this almost unprecedented step. My first instinct in looking back over the year was to select the ten worst films, but I couldn't get *that* list down under one hundred titles. In the process of grappling with the problem, however, I realized that, despite the overwhelming preponderance of lousy movies last year, there had been a few good ones as well. The realization that as many as ten good films had actually been made took me so completely by surprise, I felt I should say something about it.

My somewhat uncertain plans for this project were finally jelled when, at the voting meeting of the National Society of Film Critics, the award for best supporting actor went to Robert Preston in *S.O.B.* Another pleasant surprise, since I can't remember when I last agreed with a choice made by my colleagues. More important, the honoring of Preston reminded me not only that *S.O.B.* was a good movie, but that I had never written about it. In pondering what should appear on my ten-best list, I noticed that there would be several films which I hadn't written about. Here were yet more examples of my dilatoriness, my procrastination, my shameful irresponsibility. (The reason for these omissions was, usually, that I hadn't caught up with the film until it was no longer first-run.) So I at once made a new year's resolution to do a better job of keeping up with the movies this year. Unfortunately, the first column I wanted to do on a few film will have to wait. I think I should first make some amends to the good films I never got around to last year.

What follows, then, is my ten-best list for 1981, in alphabetical order, along with my belated remarks on some of the inclusions. The merits of these films will no doubt be news to those poor, ill-informed souls who are my regular readers:

- *All Night Long.*
- *Atlantic City.*
- *Blow-Out.*
- *Body Heat.*
- *Heartland.*
- *Outland.* Peter Hyams wrote and directed this remake of *High Noon* set in a space station and with Sean Connery in the role originally played by Gary Cooper. The grafting of the past onto the future is pleasing as a conception, and Hyams does some wonderful things with it. Have you ever noticed how you always feel dirty after a few hours on an airliner, even though you've been in one of the most filtered and sanitized of human environments? That's how Hyams makes life in his space colony feel — clammy, icky, unclean.

The brave new world he creates is far from other-worldly; its major problem is drug addiction, and this is not the only way in which it resembles an urban ghetto on earth. The people are unshaven, the bars sleazy, and the bad trips freaky (the film opens with a scene in which a worker who has o-d-ed hallucinates spiders). This is not one of those interstellar spaces where people get shot with paralyzer rays the way they did on *Tom Corbett, Space Cadet.* A pump-action shotgun works here, and violent death is, like everything else, messy. It seems that what truly inheres in the civilization of high technology, our civilization, is a certain grubbiness, a kind of physical and social deterioration that man will take with him wherever he goes. This is what *Outland* suggests, anyway, with a great deal of conviction and urgency.

- *Raiders of the Lost Ark.*
- *S.O.B.* If you gave this film only one award, as the National Society did, then Robert Preston was the person to give it to. Although he was only a supporting actor, the role he played was central to the film. Any movie about moviemakers appeals to me in the same way that self-portraits by photographers do. Each has a mirror-mirror quality that makes it revealing. The role in *S.O.B.* that writer-director Blake Edwards actually seems to have based on his personal experience is that of the filmmaker, played by Robert Mulligan, who becomes suicidal when the studio tries to dump a turkey he's made starring his own wife (Julie Andrews). Blake Edwards's own wife *is* Julie Andrews, and the turkey he made with her in it was either *Darling Lili* or *Star!* — I'm not sure which one he has in mind here.

Yet one suspects that Edwards sees himself now as being somebody more like the doctor played by Preston. This Hol-

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lywood doctor does rather more successfully what the filmmaker-hero of *S.O.B.* is trying to do: give the people what they want. The only difference is that the doctor dispenses his opiates through a hypodermic instead of a camera. *S.O.B.* is a very cynical movie, a black comedy loaded with all the venom and vengeance that, as one can well imagine, a battle-scarred veteran like Edwards has stored up over the years. Even the beautiful, talented wife played by his real wife is seen to be a scheming rat in the end. Only two characters manage not to be tainted by it all, and I take each to be an aspect of Edwards's own feelings about himself. Both survive by remaining vaguely detached from the constant crises going on around them. They remain rather insensitive to such commotion. One of these characters is the doctor, and the other is a director played by William Holden, whose death not long after *S.O.B.* came out seemed a kind of sardonic last laugh at the movie's own comedy.

- *Stevie.*
- *True Confessions.* I did at least mention, in my review of *Body Heat*, how good *True Confessions* is. To a degree my admiration for the film is simply technical, because of the superb job Joan Didion and John Gregory Dunne have made of adapting his novel to the screen. Their script accomplishes everything that Pinter's for *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, being too gimmicky, too clever by half, does not. Dunne's novel, wonderful as it is, is all atmosphere. The longer it goes on, the better it gets, but also the more irresolvable. Its ending is its weakest section, partly because we want it never to end, and partly because it has no way to end. Dunne has created such a moral and emotional deadlock in the book that there's no believable way out.

By simplifying the story and relying upon the performances of Robert De Niro and Robert Duvall, the film becomes more credible as a narrative. With much of the tortuous twisting and turning of Dunne's original gone, the relationship between the two brothers, one a monsignor and the other an L.A. cop, becomes purified in a way that makes it more compelling. And De Niro and Duvall give the story the performances that it needs, thus achieving something extremely rare, at least in my experience: a first-rate movie based on a novel that is itself first-rate.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

UNDERSTANDING THE NEO-EVANGELICALS

Religious right: new? right?

MAX L. STACKHOUSE

IT SEEMS to me that non-Protestants especially should attend to the new public visibility of the Neo-Evangelicals, sometimes called the "new religious right." Much that goes under these names is, in fact, neither "new" nor "right." What is now reappearing in militant and often fractured form is, in part, but the resurfacing of deep strands of Protestant thought that have decisively shaped aspects of the whole culture. Premature rejection of it is likely both to polarize religious groups further and to miss the import of major elements in our common life.

However critical ecumenically-oriented Protestants might be of these movements, many of us experience a certain frustration when we read or hear accounts of them by otherwise discerning Catholics, Jews, or secular journalists. Although the militarism of Cardinal Cooke, the chauvinism of Rabbi Korff and the scientism of E.O. Wilson are viewed as slight distortions of deep commitments, deriving from profound insight and long tradition, the Neo-Evangelicals are treated as by-products of social or social-psychological forces which no one could really take seriously in terms of authentic religion.

Often, commentators on these movements import perspectives into their analysis which do not seem to be appropriate. Consider, for example, the essays by the superb journalist Frances Fitzgerald. In her lengthy *New Yorker* article on Jerry Falwell (May, 1981), and her more recent essay in the *New York Review of Books* (Nov. 19, 1981), she uses implicit definitions of spirituality, morality, freedom, worship, and sect which derive from Roman Catholic thought or from secular political theory and do not neatly fit her subjects. She is not alone in missing the links between deeper dimensions of Protestant thought and the particular ways these are utilized. and distorted, by the Neo-Evangelicals. The much celebrated message by Yale President Giamatti on the same topics has many of the same frailties.

The wider implications of this observation are two-fold: If one intends to offer criticism of a movement, it is best to be sure that the target of critique is clearly in view. And, since evangelicalism in its several forms has been so influential in shaping the general ethos of American culture, failure to grasp its inner content and general contours is likely to produce little more than increased alienation. Indeed, reactionary political forces have been able to exploit evangelicalism precisely to the degree that no one else would give them a hearing or a forum for deeply held convictions.

In several languages, the word "evangelical" is best translated "Protestant." Most Protestants are, in this classical sense, evangelicals. It means a primary concern with the "good news" as derived from Scripture, and often a suspicion of ethics or politics derived essentially from secular or humanistic (ancient

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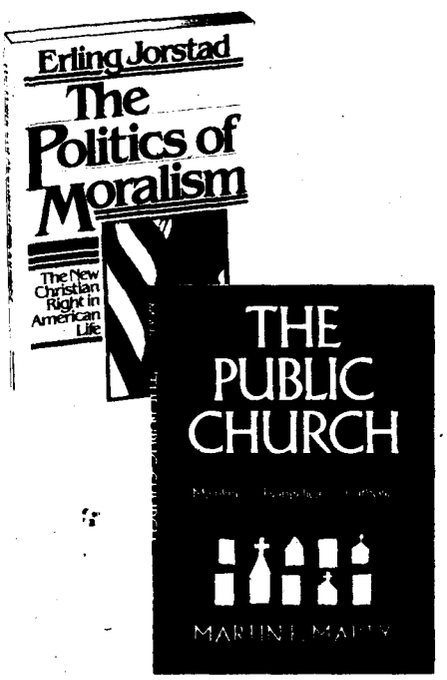
or modern) sources. Theology, not philosophy or science, is considered to be the most universal mode of discourse; and God's righteousness, not the calculation of the common good, is held to be the foundation of ethics. Indeed, many "evangelicals" in this classical sense see their Protestant movements as the truly catholic ones since the Catholic church limited its catholicity by becoming too Roman. They also are suspicious of those Protestants for whom the Enlightenment and subsequent sociological and psychological perspectives have defined the core of their commitments. That is why their chief enemy is "secular humanism."

IN AMERICA, this classical evangelical impetus split into three distinct branches. The first is "puritan evangelicalism" which, from the days of Jonathan Edwards, became linked with the thought of John Locke and his successors, re-engaging in dialogue with secular sciences. Eventually passing through the "Social Gospel" movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, it emerged as the core of Protestant ecumenical, or "mainline" churches. This stream of theological thought was a decisive influence in shaping American views of democracy, human rights, and social progress. As Digby Baltzell has shown in his excellent *Puritan Boston and Quaker Philadelphia* (The Free Press, $19.95, 585 pp. 1980), this is the tradition into which also many American Roman Catholics moved, not always with full awareness of the source of their views. (He cites the Kennedys, for example. One could also cite John Courtney Murray and Father Robert Drinan).

A second stream of evangelicalism can be called "pietistic." This stream is primarily concerned with the personal and inward experience of salvation in Christ, and with the renewal of devotional, interpersonal, and church life. Many in this stream have felt that it was not proper for Christians to take public stands on social and political issues. Frequently, this tradition interacted in America with Anabaptist thought, and has been in close conversation with the Friends, the Mennonites, some Pentecostals, and similar "counter-cultural" Christian movements. It is from this tradition that such journals as *The Other Side, Sojourners,* and *Katallegete* are edited. In large measure, this is also the tradition of the black churches, brought to new visibility by Martin Luther King, Jr.

The third stream is properly called "fundamentalistic." Although George M. Marsden, in his outstanding book *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (Oxford U. Press, $19.95, 275 pp. 1980), documents that the term "fundamentalism" did not enter the Western lexicon until the second decade of the twentieth century, this wing is rooted in efforts to deal with problems of authority in the face of "modernism." It focused on the inerrancy and the literal infallibility of Scripture, and on a millenarian, "catastrophic" interpretation of history. It developed its main focus in the same time period that the Roman church was defining, officially, the infallibility of the pope. Discredited by the 1928 Scopes trial over evolution, this group withdrew from overt public engagement for several decades.

For the most part, both the pietistic and the fundamentalistic forms of evangelicalism had been cut off from national influence by the predominance of puritan evangelicalism (as it became Ecumenical Protestantism) and by the increasing power of Roman Catholicism. The latter two largely controlled church-related educational institutions, presses, "public religious statements," and the training of clergy. The pietistic and fundamentalistic evangelicals did not fade away, however; they developed extensive networks of highly committed local congregations, independent Bible colleges, "revival circuits," their own presses, and distinctive "non-cosmopolitan" styles of preaching. The South and the Midwest are peppered with them. And, when first radio, and then television, gave them access to wider audiences, they moved their witness to the airwaves. The economic resurgence of the Bible Belt, now called the Sun Belt, and the declining fortunes of great metropolitan areas where Ecumenical Protestant and Roman Catholic influence was greatest, brought about a new vigor, even a militancy, to commitments that had been there all along. In their view, the biblically-based backbone of American morality was being dismantled by an equally militant permissive relativism.



Only a few of the newer books on this movement seem to be alert to these historical roots of the Neo-Evangelicals. Martin E. Marty, the noted church historian, knows the depth and breadth of the evangelical influence. He wants to draw it into a wider conversation. Thus he calls for a new ecumenism among "Mainline, Evangelical, and Catholic" communions in his delightfully written *The Public Church* (Crossroad, $10.99, 170 pp. 1981). It is time, he says for a new "communion of communions." Certain classic values and Christian themes are preserved by each of these great communions and neglected by others. Hence, each becomes lopsided and unbalanced when measured by the deepest traditions of faith. He suggests practical strategies for this new ecumenism, and devotes several sections of the book to the proper role of religion in public life.

Peggy Shriver, director of research for the National Council of Churches, presents perhaps the best and most balanced approach to the political impact of the Neo-Evangelicals that has thus far been

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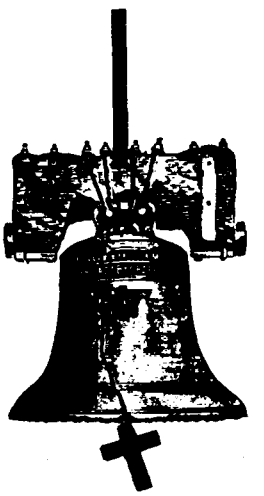
published. Her ecumenical spirit, populist instincts, and sustained experience in the South equip her to give careful attention to the actual documents put out by the Neo-Evangelicals and their critics, without adopting the polemics of several journalists who have been less attentive to what is actually being said by these groups. In *The Bible Vote: Religion and the New Right* (Pilgrim Press, $5.95, 160 pp. 1981), she sees "cause for genuine rejoicing" in the new awareness among evangelicals that it is the "duty of Christians to be involved in public decision-making." These groups have set the groundwork for the next, necessary steps: ecumenical debate on how, and on what issues, and in what directions Christians should address the society at large. She is also very clear about the rights of such groups to speak out. Contemporary confusions about the "separation of church and state" cannot be used as clubs to silence religious freedom and public witness. Shriver's work, like Marty's, serves as an invitation to become engaged in a new mutuality of criticism and accountability.

THIS ECUMENICAL mutuality may, however, fare differently with different evangelicals. Catholics and Ecumenical Protestants may find it relatively easy to engage those contemporary representatives of the pietist evangelicals who are finding new ways to address public issues from a profoundly biblical perspective. Ronald J. Sider, author of *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger: A Biblical Study* (Intervarsity Press, $4.95, 252 pp. 1978), and Richard Mouw, author of *Called to Holy Worldliness* (Fortress $5.50, 156 pp. 1980), have already been drawn into ecumenical conversations.

Jim Wallis, in his *The Call to Conversion* (Harper and Row, $9.95, 190 pp. 1981) and Parker J. Palmer, in his *The Company of Strangers: Christians and the Renewal of America's Public Life* (Crossroad, $10.95, 169 pp. 1981) represent fresh efforts to articulate the core values of Christian piety in such a way that the transformed inner tissues of commitment become the source of wider public renewal. Wallis, once a fundamentalist, begins by re-examining the concept of conversion. He preserves its intense personal core, but extends its meanings, properly in my judgment, to public witness about hunger, economic injustice, and the necessary transformation of the nuclear peril. Palmer, trained in the ecumenical traditions of theology, recounts his growing awareness of the fact that the idea of "public" witness is betrayed if it is first of all conceived as "political actionism." Instead, he finds himself backing into an "evangelicalism which smacks of Thomas Merton" by being forced to deal with the lost sense of intimacy and spirituality among the people and by attempting to rebuild a genuine sense of "congregation" at the local level in the depersonalized city. These voices suggest the prospect of a mutually rewarding conversation with a kind of conservatism that is prophetically concerned to re-apply ancient values to new contexts.

The Fundamentalist Phenomena: The Resurgence of Conservative Christianity, edited by Jerry Falwell (Doubleday, $13.95, 269 pp. 1981), however, suggests that rapprochement with some contemporary fundamentalist evangelicals will be much more difficult. Although nationally known figures such as Billy Graham and Carl Henry might, on some counts, be placed in this group, the hard-line fundamentalists accuse even these of "selling out" because of their interactions with ecumenically-oriented protestants and Catholics.

Many of the contemporary radio and television Neo-Evangelicals do not fit neatly into the hard-line camp. Clear echoes of puritan and pietist evangelicalism as well as moments of fundamentalism can be heard in Oral Roberts, Rex Humbard, and Jerry Falwell. Indeed, one needs a guide to the players to know what is going on. Erling Jorstad's *The Politics of Moralism* Augsburg, $4.95, 128 pp. 1981) has provided a handy survey of the major figures in "Christian TV Biz," for those who are not familiar with the phenomena.



More substantive, although distressingly more glib in style, is Jeffrey Hadden and Charles E. Swann, *Prime Time Preachers* (Addison-Wesley, $11.95, 288 pp. 1981). These authors help sort out the spectrum of television religion, and point out clearly that it is not one single thing. Robert Schuller and Jim Bakker are simply not new versions of Elmer Gantry. The phenomenon is, in fact, quite pluralistic. They detail the available statistics about who watches what, how much money is involved, and what the relative stability of the constituencies might be. They outline major themes of the different notables.

This essentially sociological account is important in another respect: the authors show that the ideas conveyed through the television media are themselves as influential as "social" causes. Thus, these sociologists challenge those who see religion in these streams as products of ideological interests produced entirely by a convergence of social forces and the technology of television itself. Their analysis leads the reader to the brink of ethical and theological evaluation. For the most part, we are seeing religion with social implications, not simply reactionary politics wrapped in religiosity.

NORMATIVE EVALUATION of resurgent evangelicalism is still in its first stages. Only two books which I have seen come close to the substantive issues, and they do so from different angles. Both recognize that the key issue is the question of orthodoxy or heresy. Simply to criticize these movements because they are likely to have social or political consequences which others do not prefer

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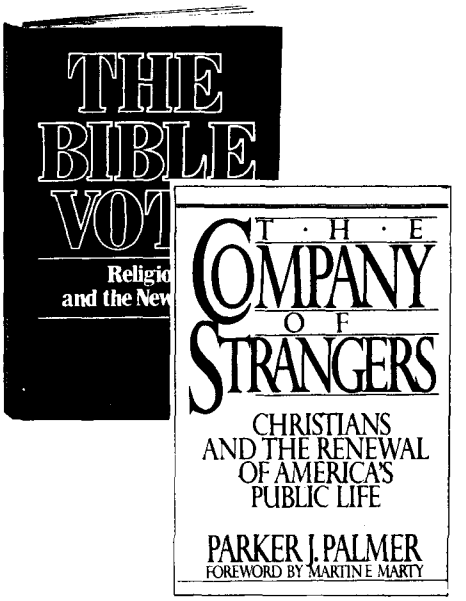
on political grounds is to leave the theological and ethical core of the matter untouched. Disagreements will then become only the mobilization of force and counterforce under the tacit presumption that might will prove who is right.

Robert Webber, a graduate of Bob Jones University and a professor at Wheaton College in Illinois, is concerned to show what is, and what is not, genuine evangelicalism. He sees the truly orthodox, catholic, and apostolic tradition to have been betrayed by that sort of evangelicalism which has emerged into the ecumenical perspectives of Protestant ecumenism, and by the sort of fundamentalist evangelicalism which has organized itself into the "Moral Majority." In his *The Moral Majority, Right or Wrong* (Cornerstone Books, $9.95, 190 pp. 1981), he argues for a "third way" between these two betrayals.

The Moral Majority, in his view, has imported the secular-humanist ideas of Milton Friedman's economics, Douglas MacArthur's politics, and Phyllis Schafly's views of the family into the Gospel, and so distorted it. On the other side, he holds that ecumenical Protestantism, as represented by the World Council of Churches, has been tainted by Karl Marx's economics, Che Guevara's politics, and Bella Abzug's secular-pragmatic feminism. The Roman Catholic church, in his view, is so far from the center of discussion that he scarcely mentions it.

He calls for a true evangelicalism, presently articulated by such authors as E.J. Carnell, Harold Lindsell, and Francis Schaeffer.

It is a genuinely ecumenical evangelicalism, in his view, as can be seen in the covenant of the Lausanne Conference of 1974, as well as by its openness to such influences as Anglicans, C.S. Lewis, and Dorothy Sayers, and to such Anabaptists as John Howard Yoder. The focus of this sort of evangelicalism is that the voluntary, believer's church is a divine institution. The church is properly engaged with society and culture, in that it is deeply concerned with human rights, ecological, racial, and poverty problems. Yet it rejects militarism, sexist authoritarianism, and materialism as means or end. Thus true evangelicialism signals that it "belongs to the Kingdom which is not of this world and has no affinity with the powers which rule this world."



The moral strategies call for genuine conversion of person, mind, and lifestyle, with the church as the prophetic model of community life, and the Protestant doctrine of Christian vocation as the guide to social action. (Doctors are to serve the sick, lawyers are to serve minorities, employers are to hire, train, and properly pay the poor, etc. "in but not of the world.")

GABRIEL FACKRE'S *The Religious Right and the Christian Faith* (Eerdmans, $8.95, 160 pp. June, 1982) is one of the very few contemporary efforts to "probe below the level of moral combat and political encounter to the substructures of theological belief." In spite of an overly "popular" style, Fackre knows the nuanced differences between the various stripes of Neo-Evangelical and points out again and again the areas in which, in language sometimes quaint to modern ears, they in fact accurately grasp one or another classical feature of Christian doctrine. This ecumenical and, in some ways "liberal," voice has taken greater care than most to sort out the distinctions. At certain points, however, his attempt to hear sympathetically is stretched to the limits, and, for the sake of faith, he sharpens his critical axes.

On the positive side, he is convinced that the Neo-Evangelical critique of "secular humanism" is basically correct. In the final analysis, no Christian can make "finite human judgment derived from secular experience definitive of ultimate truth. . . . [That] sets humanity in the place of Deity. [It is] . . . an act of human self-elevation . . . , and imperialism of human judgment." And Fackre acknowledges this "Pelagian" error, in modern garb, is exactly what many self-styled "liberal" and "progressive" Christians have accepted.

On the negative side, the fundamentalistic evangelicals too often think that they can assure God's righteousness by legislating civil statutes guaranteeing holiness. They confuse (as do those Jews, Mormons, and Catholics who cooperate with the Moral Majority) problems of sin and crime. They obscure the difficulty of separating the sheep from the goats, the wheat from the tares. And they are driven to this confusion by understanding the Christian faith in terms which echo the heresies of Manicheism and docetism. Those who think that these heresies are but ancient temptations have not studied the scripture, or the tradition, or the contemporary situation, deeply enough.

This cluster of new books gives us helpful insight into what may well be the most important new developments in American religion of this decade. The phenomenon, however, is not fully understood by any one of these authors or by the reviewer; nor is it finished in its development.

On the whole, the movement is *mildly* dangerous, in my judgment. The new visibility of this movement could, at its worst, move the society toward a perilous "Christian Ayatollaism" which we shall have to oppose with vigor, theologically and politically. Or it could signal a second great Protestant Reformation with which all shall have to wrestle. Or it may be little more than another in the series of "Awakenings" which have periodically appeared in American life and which we note and pass through. Since all these groups constantly speak of

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the transforming power of the Gospel, it is not beyond the realm of the possible that they will eventually be converted to its accents on compassion and mercy as well as to its emphasis on righteousness and zeal.

If ecumenical Protestants and Catholics attend to these developments discerningly, however, it is quite possible that we can draw them into a wider ecumenical conversation, become attentive to the call for rededication, experience a new sharing in the whole body of Christ, and seek together for ethical renewal of public life—a renewal that can give to a civilization which seems to have lost its moral rudder better guidance than any of us alone have thus far engendered.

Books: ANGUISH BEFORE RENEWAL

THE POPES AND EUROPEAN REVOLUTION
Owen Chadwick
Oxford University, $84, 646 pp.

John Tracy Ellis

"THIS BOOK tries to describe the difference made to the papacy by the European Revolution of 1789 to 1815; or, in other words, what Catholicism was like before the deluge and what it was like after, what the continuity and what the differences." Professor Chadwick's superb account of the church from the French Revolution to about 1830 fulfills admirably the purpose stated in the opening sentence of his preface. It is one of the projected series of some twenty volumes being edited by the author and his distinguished brother, Henry Chadwick, under the title of Oxford History of the Christian Church, that will run from antiquity to the present day. If the succeeding volumes achieve the standards set by the work under review—and the names associated with the respective titles offer assurance in that regard—those of the English-speaking world who have an interest in ecclesiastical history, will be well repaid. In fact, the first published volume in the series, *A History of the Churches in the United States and Canada* (1977) by Robert T. Handy of Union Theological Seminary, has already lived up to standards of this kind.

Owen Chadwick, Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Cambridge, demonstrated his mastery of the Catholic church's nineteenth-century history in his Henson Lectures of 1976, *Catholicism and History. The Opening of the Vatican Archives* (1978) was an absorbing treatment in which this Anglican historian revealed a deep sympathy combined with a critical sense that met the highest professional demands of sound history. It is a rare combination and few attain it.

The present work is so rich in detail and so thorough in bibliographical coverage in all the leading western European languages that the reader feels a sense of awe. And when these features are spelled out in a style distinguished by clarity, humor, and literary grace, even the non-professional will find the learned treatise a delight to read. The extensive bibliography with critical notes, the ample index, and the references to sources at the foot of the respective pages—all are in keeping with the expectation of both the scholar and the educated general reader.

What, one may ask, has a book that treats of events that happened from two centuries to a century and a half ago, to offer to readers in 1982? If they are Catholic they are painfully aware of the divisiveness that has plagued their religious community since Vatican Council II. If the reader is a non-Catholic with an interest in Catholicism, what has such a person to learn here? Chadwick provided one answer in his inaugural lecture as Regius Professor at Cambridge in 1968 when he said, "History . . . does more than any other discipline to free the mind from the tyranny of present opinion." It was another way of stating the famous axiom of George Santayana, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." In other words, the reader of this latest work of Owen Chadwick will learn that the church has withered and 'died' before. In these pages is traced the story of her virtual annihilation in France in the 1790s, only to be born anew in 1801 with the concordat of Napoleon, defective as that instrument certainly was from Rome's point of view. Not only was Catholicism born anew; it experienced a restoration and renewal that were little short of astonishing. Here one finds solid documentation for the judgment of a writer in the *Times Literary Supplement* (January 2, 1959) who in reviewing E.E.Y. Hale's *The Catholic Church in the Modern World,* recalled Macaulay's well known tribute of 1840 to the Catholic church and then remarked:

> The century that has passed since Macaulay wrote has seen onslaughts even more grievous than those he had in mind, but, after reading Mr. Hales' absorbing account of revolutions and calamities of every sort from without and within, one is left with the impression of a resilience in face of disaster, which simply as an historical fact, must be without parallel.

Expressed in other terms, for those who are dismayed by the current disarray in Catholic ranks, *The Popes and European Revolution* will lend abundant evidence to substantiate the oft-quoted remark, *plus ça change, c'est plus la même chose.*

The fact is spelled out by Chadwick in any number of ways, e.g., in the section entitled, "The Fall of the Jesuits," in the treatment of the issue of clerical celibacy, and in the changes wrought in parish life where out of the eighteenth-century rot the revolutionary upheaval brought about a condition of which the author writes, "They [the laity] wanted a stronger parish and congregational life, and the nineteenth century developed the parish in a manner unthinkable under the old regime." Meanwhile certain

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centuries-old customs were permanently buried, such as right of sanctuary, benefit of clergy, and usury.

In all of this the perennial conflict of conservatives vs. liberals was everywhere present from the Roman Curia down to the small parish community. If the Curia obstructed enlightened policies, as it often did, it also intervened at times on the side of genuine morality and common sense. When, for example, the archbishop of Lisbon refused to ordain a colored man, "Rome ruled against him and declared such decisions null." The narrative abounds in perceptive vignettes, e.g., of Napoleon, "He was not a man who by nature felt mystery in the universe, and after he rose to power was too arrogant to capture humility of mind." Nor are there lacking what one might call the oddities and the turns and twists of history. Cardinal Antonio Severoli, bishop of Viterbo, told his priests to note down the faults of their parishioners in a secret book and ordered doctors to persuade the sick to make their confession and to abandon them after three days if they refused to do so. The same Severoli came within six votes of being elected pope in the conclave of 1823, and the church was saved from this calamity by the veto of the Austrian emperor. And these are only a few samples of what one finds here.

Professor Chadwick interprets the "European" in his title in a strictly continental sense, for one finds virtually nothing about the English and Irish Catholics of the period; the name of Daniel O'Connell is not even in the index. One misses as well a treatment of the extraordinary growth of the new religious congregations that began in France and elsewhere around 1800. As for errors of fact, the book is singularly free, although the estimated 22,000 Jesuits of 1773, the year of the suppression, can hardly be described thus, "they never again came anywhere near the number of when they were suppressed." Even with the great decline in numbers since 1965, the Jesuits numbered over 27,000 in 1981. The lengthy narrative has remarkably few typographical errors, such as 'siminary' for 'seminary' (p. 519). If no book is ever perfect, one can truly say that *The Popes and European Revolution* comes enviably close to that ideal. The work is learned without being pedantic and thorough while escaping tedium. It will remain for a long time to come the most authoritative, informative, and readable account in English of the church's anguished experience in an age of unparalleled disruption followed by an almost spectacular recovery and renewal.

Keys to the Catholic vision

UNDERSTANDING CATHOLICISM
Monika K. Hellwig
Paulist, $4.95, 200 pp.

Robert P. Imbelli

NOT TOO LONG ago a teacher of theology was hard pressed to find books which presented a comprehensive Catholic theological vision, while being fully in the spirit of Vatican II. Understandably, the early efforts towards theological renewal took the form of exploratory articles rather than book-length studies. Nonetheless the predicament for teachers, both in formal classroom settings and more informal discussion settings, remained acute. The appearance of Joseph Ratzinger's *Introduction to Christianity* in the late sixties offered new promise; and, though dense in style, it continues to be a richly rewarding work. Recently, the harvest has become more bountiful, providing such fine resources as Richard McBrien's extensive study, *Catholicism*. Yet there is still ample cause to celebrate Monika Hellwig's splendid new book, *Understanding Catholicism*. No other single work with which I am acquainted presents so fresh and accessible an introduction to the essentials of the Catholic vision. It is a book for all seasons and for many and varied audiences.

The author organizes her study into four major divisions; "Human Life Be-

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fore God," "Jesus, the Compassion of God," "The Spirit in the Church," and "The Mystery of the End." Under these headings she treats such specific themes as revelation, creation, sin, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the church as communion and institution, sacraments, individual and social destiny, and God as Trinity. The treatment of each theme is always succinct and stimulating, often poetic and profound. Integral to the presentation are well-considered historical references (to church councils, prominent theologians, and heretical movements) which show her deep respect for the fidelity to the Catholic past. However, Hellwig does not merely recite the formulas of the past; she strives to penetrate their sense so as to contribute creatively and responsibly to the Catholic future. The dominant tone is both traditional and personal, deeply irenic, and challenging.

I should like to single out several key

Religious booknotes

A thicket of theologies

Marianne Sawicki

ONCE UPON a rainy day, a friend gave me an old plastic bag to keep my notebooks dry. The bag had traveled across the sea with him from a bookstore in Germany,

Contemporary American Theologies: A Critical Survey, *by Deane William Ferm, Seabury Press, $8.95, 192 pp.*

and it bore the slogan "Erfahrung man kaufen kann" — "experience one can buy." To read is to profit from someone else's experiences.

Life experiences in the Western hemisphere have generated religious literature so diverse that we no longer speak of trends in theology on the American continents, but of theologies plural. Deane William Ferm's survey *Contemporary American Theologies* assesses the most significant writers and books that make up evangelical, black, Roman Catholic, feminist, and liberation theologies. The survey is equally useful as an introduction or as a review. What the reader may take to be the strong point of these distinctively American theologies, however, seems to Ferm a weakness; namely, that they are

Foremothers: Women of the Bible, *by Janice Nunnally-Cox, Seabury Press, $6.95, 182 pp.*

"splinter theologies" concentrating on a particular group's experience without achieving a grand single vision of the human and the divine. Perhaps an American synthesis lies in theology's future; for now, the sharp sparkle of the splinters is surely to be cherished.

Ferm finds that feminist theology, like American theology at large, lacks any organizing theme or focus. Yet within it there is at least a concerted effort to retrieve the biblical data on feminine humanity. Janice Nunnally-Cox's *Foremothers* contributes in that vein a simple retelling of the stories of many of the women whom the Bible mentions. For the most part

From Chaos to Covenant: Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah, *by Robert P. Carroll, Crossroad, $14.95, 352 pp.*

she sticks to the scriptural facts, and indeed exposes some "facts" that never were; for example, that the Bible nowhere identifies Mary Magdalene as having been a hooker. Occasional references to extra-biblical sources are generally helpful, although Nunnally-Cox incautiously accepts Dorothy Irvin's questionable claim to have found evidence in artworks that women led Eucharistic celebrations in ancient times. The stories go from Sarah to Syntyche, Pauline teachings, and the Greek and Latin Fathers. Nunnally-Cox's gentle pastoral touch befits a minister who traces her ancestry through Lydia, Priscilla, and the disciple Tabitha.

One male biblical figure's story, or rather that of his book, occupies Robert Carroll in *From Chaos to Covenant*, a preparatory volume for a commentary on Jeremiah which is yet to come. Carroll doubts that a quest for the historical Jeremiah himself can arrive at his *ipsissima verba*, for in the book as it now stands, the prophet's original material has been recast by a committee of Deuteronomistic editors who have enlisted him as a spokesman

Küng in Conflict, *by Leonard Swidler, ed., Doubleday: Image, $8.95, 627 pp.*

for their own school of theology. The Book of Jeremiah itself is a metaphor for the redactional community activity which produced it, according to Carroll's substantial but very readable argumentation.

Editors continue to play crucial roles in interpreting the experiences and pronouncements of men with prophetic aspirations. Leonard Swidler has collected in one volume the exchanges between Hans Küng, the German bishops, and the Vatican which led eventually to the removal of the Swiss theologian's *missio canonica*. History and justice (not to

The Expansion of God, *by Leslie G. Howard, Orbis Books, $14.95, 461 pp.*

mention the curiosity of the theological reading public) are well served by *Küng in Conflict*, the most complete dossier on the Küng affair in English.

A different sort of fascination attaches to Leslie Howard's *The Expansion of God*, a treatise which seesaws between strategies for the indigenization of Christian experience and theology in Asia, and proposals that certain Christian doctrines can be better expressed in Asian philosophical

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sensitivities which particularly recommend the book. Firstly, the author takes care not to slight either the individual call to conversion, which the Gospel addresses to each, or the institutional context which helps or hinders the transformative process. For the Catholic vision embraces both the individual and the societal; and its ecclesial sense emphasizes both the communal and the institutional. The book bears no trace of the tiresome polemics concerning private or public religion, the bedchamber or the chambers of government, as though the call to conversion was restricted in scope. It simply presumes that the Catho-

categories. The range of Howard's familiarity with China, Japan, Thailand, and India is breathtaking, as is the pace at which one encounters historical, cultural, and religious allusions in the text. The effort founders, I believe, when this connoisseur of cultures runs aground on the dark islands of his own culturally engendered assumptions about femininity and his misogyny. This book is a tangled thicket of experiences, but worth the tromping through.

One merges from that Asian jungle into the symmetry of Howard Harrod's *The Human Center* as into a rose garden. Here is a modest and painstaking phenomenological description of moral experience following along lines laid down by Alfred Schutz, for

The Human Center: Moral Agency in the Social World, *by Howard L. Harrod, Fortress Press, $14.95, 160 pp.*

whom the social world is built on inter-subjective consciousness. Harrod proposes that root symbols such as duty or responsibility function to match up experiences in the everyday world with transcendent horizons of value, and thus give them moral texture.

Gibson Winter also follows Schutz's trail, to its intersections with the thought of John Dewey on art and with the theme of human dwelling which threads through Husserl, Heidegger, and Gadamer. The pathway thus traced in *Liberating Creation* is exciting in several respects. Winter suggests that human dwelling, as a living-interpreting of the "text" of societal experience, be taken up as an alternative paradigm to those of mechanism and organicism, and furthermore that dwelling be understood as an artistic creative process. We dwell in the world, that is, we create the world, *symbolically*. Artistic process displaces both the organic process of primitive societies and the

Liberating Creation: Foundations of Religious Social Ethics, *by Gibson Winter, Crossroad, $12.95, 150 pp.*

mechanistic process of technological societies as it integrates or subsumes them. The title of the book, inadequate for a work of this scope, alludes to Winter's search for a symbolism that is able to project a liberating future for our time. But the book's implications for theology, liturgical studies, anthropology, hermeneutics, and art criticism may very well overshadow its intended contribution to social ethics.

Lest the philosophers run away with the social world, let us note that Kathleen and James McGinnis share their own and their friends' experiences integrating social ministry with family ministry in *Parenting for Peace and Justice*. Theirs is a cookbook approach, figuratively and sometimes literally speaking, with chapters on simplicity (including diet), nonviolence and violence, sex

Parenting for Peace and Justice, *by James McGinnis and Kathleen McGinnis, Orbis Books, $4.95, 153 pp.*

roles, "multiculturizing" the family, social action, and prayer. The McGinnises' judicious and joyful suggestions may be recommended to parents and to anyone seeking to form a home environment of concern with the world's peace.

A Community of Character

Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic

Stanley Hauerwas

Hauerwas writes that this book "is dominated by one concern: to reassert the social significance of the church as a distinct society with an identity peculiar to itself." He examines the meaning and importance of narrative and its relation to character and virtue, criticizes current moral theory, and discusses the family, sex, and abortion.

"Hauerwas is the most consistently provocative and rewarding person writing in Christian ethics today." —Richard John Neuhaus, *Lutheran Forum*

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lic vision extends to the full range of the human before God, while any restriction of its scope is ultimately sectarian.

Secondly, this both/and of the Catholic concern also characterizes Hellwig's discussion of sin as the distortion of God's creative intent. The fragmentation and disintegration of sin have inseparable individual and societal repercussions. And, though institutions and structures can carry and prolong this evil, its roots reach deeper. Hellwig perceptively locates these roots in the very soil of human finitude, with its inevitable death-taste. Confronted with their finitude and mortality, humans either affirm or turn from the reality of their creatureliness. This fundamental option, inscribed in human deeds and projects, assumes the shape of faith or idolatry: and each option is fraught with consequences for both self and society. For, "the unwillingness to be dependent on God is most dramatically expressed in unwillingness to be interdependent with other people."

Thirdly, Hellwig's diagnosis of the human problematic issues in a nuanced and informed discussion of christology. Here she outlines a comprehensive approach which does justice to the public ministry of Jesus, the centrality of the cross, and the new creation which is resurrection. In this time of reorientation in christology, which is often reacting against a past one-sidedness, it is encouraging to see Hellwig outlne a christology that is so firmly rooted and finely balanced. In welcome contrast to some contemporary efforts, her christology accords a privileged place to the cross as the royal road to resurrection. I believe that only by thus giving central place to the mystery of the cross can one illuminate the tradition's unique claim concerning the person and work of Christ. For the crucified one is more than teacher or exemplar. He is the one who has tasted death for all that he might bring all to new life. As Hellwig suggests: "The death of Jesus is a reorientation of human freedom to God so fundamental and consequential that it constitutes a kind of cosmic explosion of possibilities which definitely alters the whole human situation."

Finally, the thread which binds the work into a coherent whole is the Catholic vision of a sacramental universe, focused upon the incarnation of Christ, but fulfilled in the ongoing transformation of all material reality, through the bodily transfiguration of men and women. The Catholic vision thus understood is not extrinsic to the human adventure but integral and wedded to it, evoking its authentic possibilities and celebrating its heights and depths. It sustains the always partial and never complete effort (this side of the consummation) to embody and sacramentalize "the fragrance of the Spirit" in all the spheres of human action and passion, creating thereby the City in which God is pleased to dwell.

For her delicate and challenging portrait of this vision in *Understanding Catholicism* all lovers of the City stand in Monika Hellwig's debt.

> *Redemption is a liberation, a setting free, not from the world and its responsibilities and claims and burdens but rather a setting free in the world to bring it to fulfill God's purpose precisely by undertaking its responsibilities and claims and burdens. Salvation in the full sense, therefore, looks to the future redemption of the whole world of human affairs, the transformation of sinful structures, the healing of painful and harmful relationships, the repairing of human community in all its dimensions, so that all is reconciled and focused toward God as its final end.* —Monika K. Hellwig
> *Understanding Catholicism*

Rediscovering Morality

AFTER VIRTUE
Alasdair MacIntyre
University of Notre Dame, $15.95, 285 pp.

Bernard Murchland

EACH TIME I begin a course in ethical thought I confront my students, by way of a test case, with the Holocaust in Nazi Germany. Why, I ask, was it wrong for Hitler to kill the Jews? All agree it was a horrendous act. But rarely can students relate their sentiments to any recognizable ethical theory or tradition. In other words, they cannot give reasons for what they feel.

My experience illustrates the central problem Alasdair MacIntyre deals with in his learned new book. His thesis is that we lack rational canons for settling moral disputes because emotivism, the reigning ethical theory of our times, holds moral judgments to be "nothing but expressions of preference, expressions of attitude or feeling." Thus we argue endlessly, without hope of agreement, for one preference must in principle be considered as good as another. Emotivism bids reason to be silent about questions of ends and values. Moreover, our moral vocabulary is a hodgepodge of ideas from different sources, all now divorced from the traditions and contexts that originally gave them meaning. So it is that "we possess indeed simulacra of morality, we continue to use many key expressions. But we have—very largely, if not entirely—lost our comprehension, both theoretical and practical, of morality."

Having thus posed in sharp terms the difficulty, MacIntyre goes on to say a great number of interesting things but in the main devotes himself to an elaboration of two propositions: (1) the Enlightenment (i.e. modern) attempt to justify morality has failed, and (2), Aristotle's account of morality is superior to all others. Implied in this latter claim is the counsel that we must get back to Aristotle and the tradition he represented if we are to make any headway. Let us consider each of these claims further.

The fundamental flaw of Enlightenment thinkers (e.g., Hume and Kant) was the ahistorical nature of their thinking. By separating moral judgments from judgments about human nature they obelized precisely those elements of traditional thought that made a coherent moral theory possible. In denying the functional (or teleological) notion of man as a creature capable of transcending his given state in light of ideals rationally conceived, they eliminated the rational

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foundation of morality. Professor MacIntyre puts it this way: "Within this tradition moral and evaluative statements can be called true or false in precisely the same way in which all other factual statements can be so called. But once the notion of essential human purposes or functions disappears from morality, it begins to appear implausible to treat moral judgments as factual statements." The disjunction of moral concepts from a unifying theory about human nature is the hallmark of liberal thinking and the wide portal through which the alienated self marched onto the contemporary moral landscape. Because he drew all the logical consequences of the claim that values and ends are purely subjective, Nietzsche is the eponym of the modernist and, admits MacIntyre, furnishes "one of the two genuine alternatives" to our present outlook.

Professor MacIntyre is *sans pareil* as a demolitionist. Academic ethics is quite simply bankrupt: positivism has failed, utilitarianism has failed, existentialism has failed! Shibboleths like the is-ought distinction and value neutrality have no sound grounds. Virtually all of our characteristic beliefs are consigned to a limbo of moral fictions: our belief in rights, the notion of utility, the claims of the social sciences, individualism, bureaucracy, much of democracy, I gather all of capitalism, therapy, managerial expertise, and so forth. Such are the conceptual dragons and witches which clutter up the moral universe of discourse but do not exist.

Now let us consider the alternative to emotivism. MacIntyre believes, indeed argues, that Aristotelianism is the most philosophically persuasive of premodern moral systems and that only some version of Aristotelianism can prevail against modernity. This is, to say the least, a bold thesis. But MacIntyre nowhere in this book shows himself reluctant to cast his bread upon the waters. He admires the virtues of heroic societies. The large truth about these societies that delights him is that there man had no moral substance apart from or anterior to his social role; there morality and social structure are one; there all value questions are questions of social fact. When we add to this the Aristotelian idea of telos, or specific end of human nature, we can construct with great accuracy an account of the virtues, that is those habits, practices, and dispositions which fulfill the telos. Such an account, for MacIntyre is the right one and the moderns were mistaken in rejecting teleology. There is, he writes, "a cosmic order which dictates the place of each virtue in a total harmonious scheme of human life. Truth in the moral sphere consists of the conformity of moral judgment to the order of this scheme."

MacIntyre writes well enough and

REVIEWERS

MONSIGNOR JOHN TRACY ELLIS *is the well known historian, now professorial lecturer in church history at the Catholic University of*

FATHER ROBERT IMBELLI *is a professor of systematic theology at Maryknoll School of Theology.*

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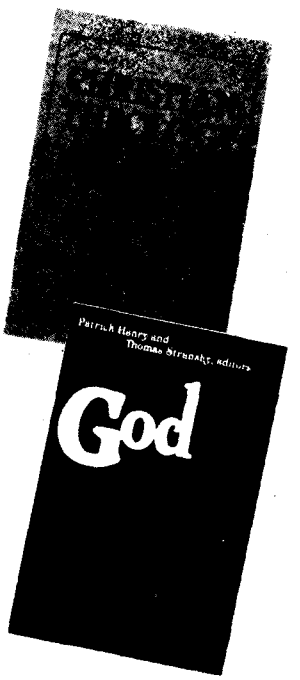

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commands his materials so masterfully that one is induced to read on to see where his line of reasoning will lead, hoping that we'll get beyond the ethics of heroic societies and pre-modern natural law theory. But we don't. And this reader was sorely disappointed! MacIntyre fails just where a moralist should succeed: to make sense of and to confirm our contemporary experience. What promised to be a stunning work of scholarship turns sour and captious, in the end little more than a jeremiad.

I make three specific criticisms of *After Virtue*.

First, it seems to me MacIntyre is somewhat disingenuous to label our modern values "moral fictions" yet conveniently ignore in his praise of heroic societies that their values too were fictions—sustained by complex traditions of story-telling and ritual enactments. Mythology, says MacIntyre, is at the heart of things. To be sure. But that is true of modern societies as well as primitive ones.

Two, MacIntyre draws our moral alternatives too tightly. To say the choice is between Nietzsche or Aristotle is dogmatic and unduly tendentious, ignoring all the moral richness and complexities of the in-between places. One obvious alternative is the ethics of John Dewey, perhaps the greatest moral philosopher of this century. Astoundingly, there is no discussion of Dewey in *After Virtue*.

Three, what finally makes MacIntyre unconvincing, I think, is his reactionary fascination with societies in which man is identified with his social role. He is not sufficiently aware of the totalitarian implications of this position. Those political thinkers (Locke, Hobbes, Mill) who postulated a moral order independently of the state began a bright new chapter in ethical history and fathered a range of values that cannot be summarily dismissed as illusions. Organismic ways of thinking, like MacIntyre's, favor statism in which, as Hegel put it, "truth, real existence, and ethical status" are inseparable from the state. Far too much blood has been shed in the name of that ideal to make it very palatable to me.

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Graduate Program

Graduate Program in Philosophy, Masters and Doctoral, St. Louis University. History of Philosophy in a contemporary problematic context of Ethics, Social and Political Philosophy, Epistemology, Philosophy of Science, Metaphysics. Contact Prof. Childress, Dept. of Philosophy St. Louis University, 221 N. Grand, St. Louis, MO 63103.

Correspondence

(Continued from page 36)

one might think he was a double agent acting in behalf of zealots who write books like "The Plug-in Drug" and "Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television."

Now that it is quite clear, that qualitatively television holds its own with the overall output of books, film and theater, any snobbishness towards the medium is as silly as the attitude theater people had toward movies in their heyday. Television deserves better than "gentleman" critics like Arlen, who write about it with all the enthusiasm of James's "A Beast in the Jungle."

DAN O'NEILL

In Brief

THE VOICE OF BLOOD: FIVE CHRISTIAN MARTYRS OF OUR TIME, *by William J. O'Malley, S.J., Orbis Books, $7.95, 195 pp.*

"Lives of Saints," as with so many traditions, have fallen on hard days. Pious niceties and hortatory expositions of other times presented the protagonists as pallid, unrealistic. Now we have stories of anti-heroes, unwillingly dragged to confrontation with the totalitarianisms of today.

The tales of "Five Christian Martyrs of Our Time," presented by William J. O'Malley, S.J., fit that pattern. A Jesuit pastor, Father Rutilio Grande, is an unlikely prospect to challenge the military government of El Salvador (this was before the martyrdom of Archbishop Romero). His only crime: a defense of the rights of the poor. The priest said it well in his sermon; "It is dangerous to be a Christian in our world. It is almost illegal to be a Catholic in our world." True; he was assassinated by out-of-uniform policemen.

Three other martyrs of the Gospel were English Jesuits in Rhodesia: Fathers Christopher Shepherd-Smith, Martin Thomas, and Brother John Conway. Black guerrillas, angry against their own people because they cooperated with the white ruling class, killed these men. The Jesuits had come to serve the blacks in a non-political way. They died, assassinated for a political cause, because the black guerrillas "wanted their own country." The missionaries were seen as enemies of the revolution so they died.

The fifth, Jesuit Father John Bosco Bernier, was killed in Brazil. Of French descent, he was Brazilian, who was undistinguished in minor Jesuit offices and ended up in the Brazilian backwaters. The priest died in an unknown place, his life almost unknown, made known by his death.

Unlikely martyrs; unwilling, in a way, saints. But they tell us more about the newer faces of evil and power in our day. Nero never dies; he changes faces.

NORBERT F. GAUGHAN

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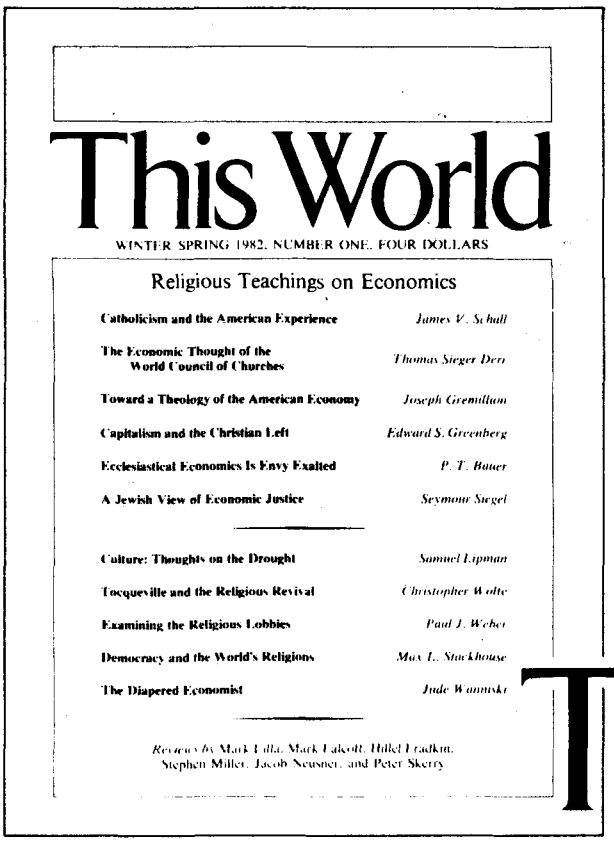
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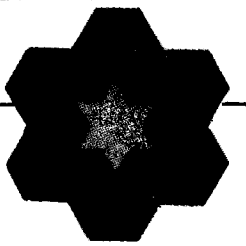

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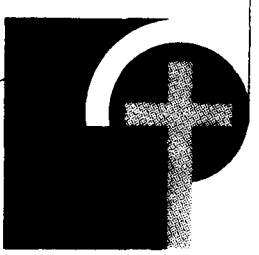

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